MOTION PICTURE REVIEWS

WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB
LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

VOL. IX - 1936

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JANUARY 1936

For practical use we suggest filing bulletins where they may be easily accessible for reference. Films are not released simultaneously over the country. You will need these reviews for constant reference.

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*Film suitable for family entertainment but not necessarily appropriate for children under 12 or for children unaccompanied by adults.

THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB
LOS ANGELES BRANCH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN
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WEBBCRAFT PRINTERS, 2609 WEST WASHINGTON BLVD., LOS ANGELES

MOTION • PICTURE • REVIEWS

Published monthly by
THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB
LOS ANGELES BRANCH
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

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Address all communications to THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB, 943 South Hoover St., Los Angeles, Calif.
Advance Supplement is published and mailed approximately the 15th of each month.
10c Per Copy - - $1.00 Per Year

Vol. IX JANUARY, 1936 No. 1

FEATURE FILMS

THE BRIDE COMES HOME » »

Claudette Colbert, Fred MacMurray, William Collier, Robert Young, Richard Carle, Donald Meek, Edgar Kennedy. Story by Elizabeth Sunxay Holding. Direction by Wesley Ruggles. Paramount.

Audiences who have seen "She Married Her Boss," starring Claudette Colbert, will no doubt be disappointed by the current opus. It is passably amusing but fails to reach the pace and sparkle of the previous production. The actors do their best with a preposterous plot but many of the scenes drag. Claudette Colbert is charming as usual, and Fred MacMurray is an excellent team mate. The plot hinges on the question of whether marriage is safe or possible between two persons of remarkably quick temper. The final decision is in favor of marriage. After a series of stormy scenes between Fred MacMurray as a magazine editor and Claudette Colbert as his infuriatingly incompetent assistant, the play culminates in a genuinely amusing marriage ceremony. The picture is light and innocuous entertainment with no serious purpose.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes **Children, 8 to 12** Yes

▼

THE CALLING OF DAN MATTHEWS » »

Richard Arlen, Charlotte Wynters, Douglass Dumbrille, Donald Cook, Mary Korman. From the novel by Harold Bell Wright. Direction by Phil Rosen. Columbia.

Possibly Harold Bell Wright did not intend to use the motive of an inspired crusade against vice to cloak sensationalism, but such is the effect of the screen version of his novel. The most distinguished and upright citizen of the town and the parents of all the nice girls and boys are such easy dupes in the hands of wicked resort managers that it takes a sublime effort on the part of a hard-hitting parson to save them all from ruin. Some of the dialogue is off-key, and even in modern settings, the feeling of the production belongs to a time that is past.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Poor **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

CAPTAIN BLOOD » »

Errol Flynn, Olivia de Havilland, Lionel Atwill, Basil Rathbone, Ross Alexander, Guy Kibbe, Henry Stephenson, Robert Barrat, Frank McGlinn, Sr. From the novel by Rafael Sabatini adapted by Casey Robinson. Direction by Michael Curtiz. Warner Bros.

Sabatini's stirring tale of adventure would have made an excellent silent film. It is splendidly satisfying in its present form. Swashbuckling melodrama, packed full of action and humor and with sufficient romance to please without sentimentality to cloy, it provides excellent entertainment, moving swiftly and consistently to the climax — a thrilling sea battle. The story is placed in the troublesome and exciting time of the weak King James II of England and concerns a physician who is driven by treachery and brutality into becoming the scourge of the sea,

the dreaded *Captain Blood.* Errol Flynn is an exciting hero, giving the character virility, romance, and gaiety. He apparently has a grand time in the role. There are other fine characterizations also. Miss de Havilland is a picturesque heroine, lovely in the costumes of the period. Great credit must be given Mr. Curtiz for his admirable direction throughout. The battle scenes are a notable achievement. Photography is outstanding; sea, ships, lights and shadows, remarkably beautiful. The story has necessarily many scenes of brutality because of its setting, but they are handled without the sinister subtlety of the cruelty of *Captain Bligh* in "Mutiny on the Bounty." The effect is therefore less depressing for adults and should be also for younger audiences. As a colorful action film it is extremely entertaining for family audiences. Probably the very best of its type.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Fine unless very sensitive

Children, 8 to 12
Exciting but harmless unless too sensitive

▼

CEILING ZERO » »

James Cagney, Pat O'Brien, June Travis, Stuart Erwin. Stage and screen play by Frank Wead. Direction Howard Hawks. Cosmopolitan.

Over a period of centuries, the myth of the "evil eye" has survived. Those who believe in its power fear contact with anyone possessed of it. While you may scoff at the thought, sometime in your life, you must have met someone whose influence brought misfortune to those about him. *Dizzy Davis* was such a man and this is his story. A cocky, swaggering, tough little fellow, he enjoyed the friendship of men and trifled with the love of women. His inability to stand by any definite code or to follow any set of rules brings unhappiness to all those whom he contacts. When he realizes that this is true, he proves himself capable of one really noble deed, and the manner of his dying becomes not just a futile gesture but a great contribution toward the future safety of aviation. The picture is exceptionally well done, the whole being so well coordinated that each faction concerned with its making deserves credit. The description of the character might have been made against any background and still have been very interesting, but the fact that aviation was chosen makes possible some highly dramatic and tensely exciting sequences. While grimness is inevitable, the script is nicely balanced with humor —humor that is not always in the best of taste, but is in keeping with the character. The problem and the appeal is adult, no compromise having been made to make it acceptable for any other group.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Too sophisticated

Children, 8 to 12
Unsuited

▼

CHATTERBOX » »

Anne Shirley, Phillips Holmes, Edward Ellis, Erik Rhodes. From the play by David Carb. Screen play by Sam Mintz. Direction by George Nicholls, Jr. R.K.O.-Radio.

This is the story of a naive country girl who runs away from her stern grandfather and tries to become an actress. Her misplaced self-confidence and final disillusionment are pathetic, as are most of the small tragedies of youth. It is pleasant entertainment because it is handled lightly and Ann Shirley is appealing, but there is very little in it that is humorous. Endless chatter justifies the title at the risk of boring the audience.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Mildly entertaining

Children, 8 to 12
No interest

▼

CORONADO » »

Johnny Downs, Betty Burgess, Leon Errol, Alice White. From a story by Brian Hooker and Don Hartman. Direction by Norman McLeod. Paramount.

This is feather-light comedy, fluttering about the Hotel Coronado. Eddie Duchin's orchestra is pleasing, combined with some good songs and tap-dancing, but Leon Errol's slipshod nonsense fails to be as funny as it is on the stage. The plot is tenuous, and life at the well-known resort scarcely seems gay enough to attract many guests.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Fair

Children, 8 to 12
Little interest

▼

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT » »

From the novel by Dostoievsky. Marian Marsh, Tala Birell, Peter Lorre, Edward Arnold. Direction by Joseph von Sternberg. Columbia.

With perfection of photography, a fine cast, and the outward semblance of a great picture, the American version of "Crime and Punishment" misses the subtlety of the French version of the same novel. The novel is the psychological study of the disintegration, through his own essential weakness and the diabolical ingenuity of a police inspector, of a murderer who has fancied himself above making the mistakes of the ordinary criminal. The American picture concentrates its efforts upon telling a detective story, while in the French picture the audience can read the workings of the murderer's mind and is fascinated by this intimate view, rather than by following the external means by which the culprit is brought to justice. Probably one who has

not seen "Crime et Chatiment" will leave the theatre satisfied that he has seen a perfect production. It is a tremendously worthwhile adventure into the realms of film analysis to see both.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Absolutely no **Children, 8 to 12** Impossible

▼

THE DANCING DUCHESS » »
(Die Czardasfuerstin)

Marta Eggerth, Hans Soenker, Paul Kemp, Paul Hoerbiger, Inge Lust. From the operetta by Emmerich Kalman. Direction by George Jacoby. British-Gaumont.

A charming old-fashioned, musical comedy with Kalman's familiar waltz songs, shows Vienna and Budapest in pre-war days. The dialogue is in German with English subtitles, but the pantomime is so good that titles are hardly needed. The plot is the old familiar one of the nobly born lover and the actress, with wedding bells when parental objections are finally overcome. Comic situations are deftly handled and most amusing. Miss Eggerth is beautiful and sings charmingly. Minor parts are exceptionally well cast, and while the picture lacks some of the Hollywood attention to detail, in essentials it is well directed. It is pleasant, if inconsequential, entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes **Children, 8 to 12** Yes

▼

THE DIVINE SPARK » »

Marta Eggerth, Phillips Holmes, Donald Calthrop, Arthur Margetson, Benita Hume. Story by Walter Reish. Direction by Carmine Galtone. Production in English from the Italian film "Casta Diva." Gaumont-British.

This episode in the early life of the composer Vincenzo Bellini is interesting more for the settings and costuming than for the acting or the naive and old fashioned story. The young *Bellini* is a music student in Naples in 1827, and the picture tells of his early struggles for success and his tragic love for Maddalena, daughter of a wealthy nobleman. During the play Miss Eggerth sings several arias charmingly and the musical accompaniment is pleasing. The principal characters are too Nordic to be convincing in their parts, but many interesting types appear in the supporting cast. The picture is pleasant if innocuous entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Educational **Children, 8 to 12** No interest

EAST OF JAVA » »

Charles Bickford, Elizabeth Young, Frank Albertson, Leslie Fenton, Siegfried Rumann. Direction by George Melford. From the story "Tiger Island" by Gouverneur Morris. Universal.

Here we have heat and dirt of the tropics, mixed breeds on a cargo ship, and a devastating typhoon hurling men and wild circus beasts onto the shores of an uninhabited isle, where the law of the jungle prevails and only a man who has lived by that ruthless code can save his fellows from death. The part of *Bowers,* played by Charles Bickford, dominates the film. Direction is sure and moves towards an inevitable end. However, it is doubtful if a story in which many men are lost in a shipwreck, and four survivors are devoured by lions, can be called diversion for any except the hardiest adults.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too strong **Children, 8 to 12** Terrifying

▼

FRESHMAN LOVE » »

Frank McHugh, Patricia Ellis, Warren Hull, George E. Stone. Based on a story idea by George Ade. Screen play by Earl Felton and George Bricker. Direction by Wm. McGann. Warner Bros.

Musical films with campus settings seem to be all alike and seldom better than mediocre. Though this one had an idea back of it that might have made excellent satire it is no better than the average. In a college where the athletic coach (played by Frank McHugh) is faced with the impossibility of making bookworms into a winning crew, the president's daughter comes to the rescue by enticing athletic young men to enroll in her father's college. The questions, "Who will win the race?" and "Who will win the girl?" are easily answered long before the picture is over.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Passable **Children, 8 to 12** Passable

▼

THE GREAT IMPERSONATION » »

Edmund Lowe, Valerie Hobson, Vera Engels. From the novel of the same name by E. Phillips Oppenheim. Adaptation and screen play by Lieutenant Commander Frank Wead and Eve Greene. Direction by Allan Crosland. Universal.

This mystery melodrama of espionage holds the interest though all the trappings are familiar. Beginning in darkest Africa, some time before the memorable assassination at Sarajevo and ending in England with Great Britain's entry into the war, a loyal British subject finds a way to serve his country heroically. A clever impersonation keeps everyone guessing. True, a haunted baronial

hall, a neurotic wife and an avaricious munitions manufacturer are some of the dangers to be confronted, but what are heroes for?

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too exciting

Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

KIND LADY » »

Aline MacMahon, Basil Rathbone, Mary Carlisle, Frank Albertson. From a play by Edward Chodorov and a story by Hugh Walpole. Direction by George B. Seitz. M.G.M.

Perhaps the fact that this story is connected with the Christmastide festivity makes it seem more sinister and sardonic, since it is the antithesis of all that the happy season represents. A generous old lady who lives alone takes into her home an apparently needy artist and his family who repay her goodness by bringing in a trio of crooks and attempting to steal her valuable paintings and other treasures. The story is unusual and dramatic, the cast is good, and suspense is well maintained, but there is little humor, and the picture has scant ethical or social value.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Unpleasant

Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

KING OF BURLESQUE » »

Warner Baxter, Alice Faye, Jack Oakie, Arline Judge, Mona Barrie, Gregory Ratoff. Based on the story by Vina Delmar. Screen play by Gene Markey and Harry Tugond. Direction by Sidney Lanfield. 20th Century.

Once more film audiences may follow the vicissitudes of back stage life as depicted on the screen. In this picture close-ups of the principal characters who enter the personal life of a burlesque producer are combined with a spectacular review. The result is a fast moving entertainment with a good mixture of human interest, humor, lavish stage settings and an adequate though not original story. The plot concerns the ambition of the producer to find "quality" outside the show business and his subsequent disillusionment when he marries a woman in smart society. The picture is not particularly different from other musical reviews.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Probably entertaining

Children, 8 to 12 Mature

▼

LAST OF THE PAGANS » »

Mala, Lotus Long, all native cast. Screen play by John Farrow. Direction by Richard Thorpe. M-G-M.

Without any pretentions to great dramatic effects this picture provides charming entertainment for audiences who enjoy lovely scenery and a simple love story of primitive people. The customs and ideals of the French Polynesians are contrasted with the unethical and ruthless behavior of English sailors who come ashore to shanghai some of the natives for work in the phosphate mines. The sympathy of the audience for the Polynesians is held throughout by interest in the romantic love of "Tahara" and a native girl played by Mala and Lotus Long who appeared in the film "Eskimo."

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes

Children, 8 to 12 Good

▼

MAGNIFICENT OBSESSION » »

Irene Dunne, Robert Taylor, Charles Butterworth, Betty Furness, Sara Haden, Ralph Morgan. From a novel by Lloyd C. Douglas. Screen play by George O'Neil, Sarah Y. Mason and Victor Heerman. Direction by John M. Stahl. Universal.

The magnificent obsession of *Dr. Hudson* was a theory that great generosity without expectation of repayment would be returned to the donor through other channels. He died almost penniless, but the influence of his life went on to aid his wife and daughter and to give a noble ambition to an extravagant and ineffectual youth. It is a strong theme which is beautifully interpreted throughout most of the film, especially in the latter part. Miss Dunne's voice is finely modulated, and every gesture is expressive in the sequences when she is bereft of sight; Robert Taylor shows the growth of character essential to his part, and several other roles are played with true understanding and ability. The story is well staged so that many individual scenes stand out in memory for pictorial quality as well as for notable direction. It is, however, unfortunate that in the effort to entertain, much of the first part of the film is allotted to pure comedy which, although successful comedy, is a separate entity, failing to blend with the rest of the picture.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Mature

Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

MAN HUNT » »

Ricardo Cortez, Marguerite Churchill, "Chic" Sale, Wm. Gargon. Direction by Wm. Clemens. Warner Bros.

As *Ed Hoggins,* old time sheriff of Costerville, "Chic" Sale is the central figure in a wild and wooly western, with emphasis on the comic relief, in which a romantic young school marm foolishly aids a fugitive bandit and gets herself and the whole town in some rather desperate scrapes. Implausible as the story is, it nevertheless will entertain a great many people who like "Chic" Sale's comedy and the naive thrills of a bandit chase in

which the sheriff's posse is sure to be successful.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Yes

▼

MILLIONS IN THE AIR » »

John Howard, Wendy Barrie, Robert Cummings, Eleanor Whitney, Willie Howard. Direction by Ray McCarey. Paramount.

The idea of Major Bowes' amateur hour has been utilized for the cinema with moderate success. The daughter of a soap king shares romance with the driver of an ice-cream wagon when they meet and warble before a microphone. The other performers present a typical series of radio acts, some boring and some clever. It is amiable and wholesome entertainment for an unexacting public.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes

Children, 8 to 12 Suitable

▼

MISS PACIFIC FLEET » »

Joan Blondell, Glenda Farrell, Hugh Herbert, Allan Jenkins. Direction by Raymond Enright. Warner Bros.

A stranded chorus girl, backed by the Marines, tries to win the contest that will give her the fame and purse attached to the title of Miss Pacific Fleet. After many vicissitudes, all of which follow the old formula but many of which are amusing, she succeeds not only in winning the title but a handsome sergeant of the Marines as well. The plot is a negligible, feeble prop for an utterly implausible series of gags and farcical situations. All attempts at human interest are sacrificed for comedy effects. However, the spontaneity of the cast and the tempo created by the director help to make a trite tale diverting.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fair

Children, 8 to 12 Mature

▼

MISTER HOBO » »

George Arliss, Gene Gerrard, Frank Cellier, Patrick Knowles. Direction by Milton Rosmer. Gaumont-British. Released through 20th Century-Fox.

In the role of a most unusual hobo Mr. Arliss drops in at the estate of the *Granville* family to get a meal in exchange for a small service and lingers long enough to display his usual kindliness and shrewdness in straightening out their personal and financial difficulties. Terse lines, amusing and unexpected situations and a pervading atmosphere of well being make this film a typical vehicle for its star.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Wholesome though probably mature

▼

NEVADA » »

Buster Crabbe, Kathleen Burke, William Duncan. From a story by Zane Grey. Direction by Charles Barton. Paramount.

This is a western with so much action that there is little opportunity for acting. Zane Grey gives us a likeable outlaw with a standard of ethics in banditry. Bad man that he is, we recognize within him a force for good. It is no surprise, therefore, when he settles down on a ranch and becomes an honest citizen and a good husband.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Questionable

Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

PEASANTS » »

Production Len Film, Leningrad, U.S.S.R. Direction, Friedrich Ermler.

The struggle of the Kulaks against the collective farms is the theme of this picture of Russian peasant life. It is admittedly a propaganda picture but the bias in favor of collective farming does not interfere with the enjoyment of the plot, and the "blessings" of Communism are not made apparent at least to American audiences. The chief interest lies in the scenes of Russian life and the remarkable peasant types shown among the minor characters. The photography lacks the super-refined finish of most Hollywood productions and the picture gains in strength thereby. The humorous scenes are characteristic of farm life the world over and successfully done. Dialogue is in Russian with English titles. The appeal of the picture will be chiefly on account of its novelty.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No; needs mature judgment

Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

PROFESSIONAL SOLDIER » »

Victor McLaglen, Freddie Bartholomew, Gloria Stuart, Constance Collier. Screen play by Gene Fowler and Howard Ellis Smith. Direction by Tay Garnett. 20th Century-Fox.

It would be hard to imagine a better combination than Victor McLaglen and Freddie Bartholomew in this delightfully imaginative fairy tale. A rough soldier protecting a gentle little boy king in an imaginary kingdom full of exciting dangers is an ideal situation to stir the latent romance in the soul of the most

blasé movie fan. This film has the added advantages of excellent acting and direction, good comedy and some really touching pathos.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Delightful
Children, 8 to 12 Excellent

▼

THE PETRIFIED FOREST » »

Leslie Howard, Bette Davis, Genevieve Tobin, Dick Foran, Humphrey Bogart, Charlie Grapewin, Paul Harvey. Play by Robert Emmet Sherwood, with screen play by Charles Kenyon and Delmer Daves. Direction by Archie L. Mayo. Warner Bros.

Leslie Howard brings his New York stage success to the screen and thus gives to a far greater audience the privilege of witnessing his sensitive performance in this unusual production. It is an intellectual treat. Because of the limitations of its settings and because it is almost entirely dialogue, it may be criticized as not being ideal screen material. But this fact makes it a more startling achievement. The close-ups give a striking portrayal of the moods and emotions of the characters, compensating for the monotony of the setting and lack of action. Bette Davis is a very interesting *Gabrielle.* She is not perhaps physically the type of person one might associate with the role, but she seems to give to it a mystic glow, an enthusiasm and a spiritual promise which is very effective. Humphrey Bogart is exceptionally fine as *Duke Mantee.* Others in the cast are good. The philosophy of the plot and the sophistication of the theme will hold no interest or understanding for any but the intellectually mature. The ending fortunately has not been softened in deference to what is supposed to be the preference of movie audiences.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No
Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

RIFF-RAFF » »

Jean Harlow, Spencer Tracy, Una Merkel, Joseph Calleia, Victor Kilian, J. Farrell MacDonald, Mickey Rooney. From an original story by Frances Marion. Direction by J. Walter Ruben. M-G-M.

This is a sordid, melodramatic story concerning the kind of people most adequately described by the title. The action moves quickly from one dramatic sequence to another but all the scenes are done in the same values. There are no high-lights, no subtle half-tones. The acting lacks sincerity because the characters are overdrawn, the situations over-dramatized. The story is of an egotist who mistakes his limited capabilities for the power that establishes an individual as a leader of men. This theme has possibilities but they are not realized here.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No
Children, 8 to 12 Too sordid

▼

SCROOGE » »

Sir Seymour Hicks, Donald Calthrop, Philip Frost. Based on "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens. Direction by Henry Edwards. Produced by Julius Hagen-Twickenham (English). Released through Para.

Universally loved and familiarly known in almost every English speaking household of a generation ago, Dickens' "Christmas Carol" is today revived in a form that should restore it to a sure place in everyone's affections. A photographic gem, with delightful music and an authentic atmosphere of nineteenth century England, it is understandingly directed and acted with simple sincerity and great tenderness.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Delightful
Children, 8 to 12 Delightful

▼

SONG OF THE SADDLE » »

Dick Foran, Alma Lloyd, Charles Middleton. Story and screen play by William Jacobs. Direction by Louis King. First National.

Revenge is the motivating force that gives action to this western melodrama. With the leading character as the avenger, a number of killings are made to seem justifiable. While the acting is superior to that seen in many westerns and while much attention is paid to settings and story coherence, nevertheless the wrong values are accented and revenge becomes a positive rather than a negative social motive.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Not recommended
Children, 8 to 12 Unsuited

▼

SPLENDOR » »

Miriam Hopkins, Joel McCrea, Paul Cavanagh, Helen Westley, Billie Burke, Katherine Alexander. An original screen play by Rachel Crothers. Direction by Elliott Nugent. Samuel Goldwyn-United Artists.

This is a most interesting picture because the theme digs down so deeply into the experience of the race. History repeats again and again the story of a family so steeped in tradition that everything is sacrificed to preserve its entity. In "Splendor," the family, a decadent one, deeply in debt and living in one of the last of the mansions on Fifth Avenue, is dominated by an autocratic, selfish and thoroughly nasty old woman. Her plans to rehabilitate the family fortunes go awry when the oldest son marries a penniless

girl. It is the opposing force of this girl, whose ideals reach above wealth and social position, which forms the substance of the play. Eventually the girl does bow under the pressure of the family's cupidity but through this very act, clarifies her own high purpose. Classified as a sophisticated social drama, the picture is smartly set and well cast. The director's deft hand is felt in the restraint in Miss Hopkin's acting, this being a quality new to her. It is glimpsed again in the rare good taste and subtlety with which many of the questionable situations are glossed over without impairing significance or tempo.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Unsuited

Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

THE STORY OF LOUIS PASTEUR » »

Paul Muni, Josephine Hutchinson, Anita Louise, Donald Woods. Play by Sheridan Gibney and Pierre Collings. Direction by William Dieterle. Cosmopolitan-Warner Bros.-First National.

Recognition of the work of the great scientist Pasteur has been expressed beautifully and dramatically in this film of his battle against disease and superstition. In a subject which might easily have become academic, one is held enthralled by the life of the man who fought to save animals and human beings from scourges which had afflicted them through the ages, and he is no less heroic because the enemies he vanquished were bacteria instead of soldiers. Paul Muni's interpretation of Pasteur is very genuine; the scientist seems to live again. The entire cast is well chosen, and the direction shows unusual understanding and subtlety. It is a story which challenges the imagination and opens new vistas of endeavor for youth of today who may carry on his high standards in the name of humanity.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Splendid

Children, 8 to 12 Good but mature

▼

SYLVIA SCARLETT » »

Katherine Hepburn, Cary Grant, Brian Aherne, Edmund Gwenn, Natalie Paley, Dennie Moore. From the novel by Compton MacKenzie. Direction by George Cukor. R.K.O.-Radio.

Perhaps few people read Compton MacKenzie any more; those who do will find *Sylvia* strangely Hepburned. She is no longer the hard little baggage with an inordinate sense of humor, and *Michael* is no longer young. The film follows the original in spirit, however, as a buoyant tale of fantastic people who follow their impulses from one unconventional situation to another, sometimes dishonest, sometimes sordid and sometimes blithe. One has little sympathy for most of the things they do, and yet because of the vivid performances of several members of the cast and the masterly guidance of the director the film has a good measure of appeal and plausibility.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Shabby standards

Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

TWO IN THE DARK » »

Walter Abel, Margot Grahame, Wallace Ford, Gail Patrick, Alan Hale. From the novel by Gelett Burgess. Screen play by Seton I. Miller. Direction by Ben Stoloff. R.K.O.

Here is a sprightly mystery story which is far from the stereotyped variety. It concerns amnesia and its vagaries. Interest is centered in the plot, which author and director have developed logically, keeping the suspense cleverly sustained until the end. Walter Abel and his supporting cast are excellent, and the picture is very entertaining.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 No objectionable features

▼

WE'RE ONLY HUMAN » »

Preston Foster, Jane Wyatt, James Gleason, Arthur Hohl. Direction by James Flood. From the story "Husk" by Thomas Walsh R.K.O.-Radio.

This is another play in which we see the gangster pitted against the hero-detective. The plot is lacking in originality and makes little attempt at verity but attains a fair degree of entertainment value through its witty dialogue and humorous characterization. We follow with mild interest the adventures of the young detective, who having been recently promoted to his position from the ranks of the police, is eager to prove his courage and initiative and to win the regard of a young woman news reporter. That he accomplishes this without being the superman of modern detective fiction lends to the drama its one refreshing quality. Of course there are the typical characters, hardboiled newshawks, undercover men, molls, etc., and there is also an excessive use of shooting affrays between the police and the underworld.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Questionable

Children, 8 to 12 Too exciting

▼

WHIPSAW » »

Myrna Loy, Spencer Tracy, Harvey Stephens, William Harrigan. From a story by James Edward Grant. Direction by Sam Wood. M-G-M.

This is an absorbing film from an entertainment angle, because of clear-cut dialogue,

rapid action, capable cast and many dramatic moments. On reflection the false standards become more apparent. The feminine assistant of jewel thieves is beautiful and charming and gets precisely what she wants in the end after a life of crime, and the brave detective manages to achieve glory and keep the girl for himself instead of relinquishing her to the law. There is a certain amount of suggestion in the scenes in which they travel constantly together under fairly intimate circumstances, this being a situation which has been handled more successfully in previous pictures.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Ethically poor

Children, 8 to 12 No

SHORT SUBJECTS

CARTOONS

SOUTHERN HORSE PITALITY. Fox. Terrytoon. Southern colonel, little girl, mortgage about due, friendly jockey, winning horse. All is sweet. Fair for family and children.

GOLDDIGGERS OF '49. Vita. The village is aroused by a gold strike. A thief steals a bag supposed to contain treasure, which turns out to be a fat man's lunch. Poor. Not for children.

SPINACH OVERTURE. Para. Popeye. In which Popeye becomes an orchestra leader and is outplayed by a rival maestro until his spinach takes effect. Good. Children and family.

COCK OF THE WALK. U.A. Silly Symphony. As usual the workmanship is superior, the colors delightful and the bits of detail most amusing, but the cartoon is not up to expectations. The story of a fighting cock who becomes a dancing teacher with all the ducks and chickens for his pupils is not elaborated as well as it might be; one sequence verges on coarseness. Fair for family and children.

BALLOON LAND. Rep. Color cartoon of life in the land of balloons, ending with the overthrow of their arch enemy, the Pincushion Man. Good for children and family.

ALIAS ST. NICK. M-G-M. Technicolor cartoon of a mother mouse who reads "The Night Before Christmas" to her assembled children, all of whom are believers in Santa Claus except one small rodent who discovers a fox masquerading as the whiskered saint and saves their lives. Excellent. Children and family.

YE OLD TOY SHOP. Fox. Terrytoon. The best of the Terrytoons. A toy maker leaves his shop on a wintry night, whereupon all his creations are animated and hold carnival to the strains of merry music. Very good for children, family.

CASE OF LOST SHEEP. Univ. Oswald. Bo-Peep's sheep get tired of their spinach and leave home to beg food from Little Red Riding Hood, Mother Hubbard and Jackie Horner until they are discovered by the radio pie-man and gladly return home. Good. Children and family.

BON BON REVUE. Col. A wistful waif is peering into a shop window, when along comes a fairy who grants his wish to journey to Candy Town. Good. Family and children.

HUMPTY DUMPTY. A.S. A poor and pointless cartoon of Humpty Dumpty with a coarse and silly theme song.

MUSICAL

IT'S EASY TO REMEMBER. Para. Richard Himber and the Ritz Carlton orchestra give an entertainment introduced by a silly cartoon of fake news headlines. Fair for family.

MEDITERRANEAN SONGS. F.W. This is a short subject of great charm and beauty. Robert Bruce presents exquisite Italian scenes with appropriate music. Excellent for all ages.

SPORT

HUNTER'S PARADISE. Col. Excellent pictures of hunting, but too cruel for children.

TOMORROW'S HALFBACK. R.K.O. A good talk accompanies these pictures of football, in which unusual details of the game are shown, as well as the various parts of the outfit and protective appliances. Excellent. All ages.

WHAT'S THE ANSWER. Para. Ted Husing repeats sporting terms and asks for their meaning. Good. Family.

TRAVEL

RURAL MEXICO. M-G-M. Beautiful views in color of the people and occupations of village and countryside in Mexico. The accompanying lecture with music is very good. Excellent. All ages.

OLD FAITHFUL SPEAKS. F. W. This is a remarkable film of Old Faithful Geyser and the mighty waters of the Yellowstone, with unusually good narrative. One hears the

actual roar of geysers and cascades. Excellent for all ages.

VARIETY

P's AND CUES. Vita. Pepperpot. Charles Peterson and Ruth McGinnis, who are billiard champions, make remarkable shots, which are explained. Fair. Adults.

ALIBI RACKET. M-G-M. Crime Doesn't Pay. Another story of crime detection dramatized by an expert. Good. Adults.

STRANGER THAN FICTION No. 15. Univ. The remarkable adjustment of a handless man to life; the film shows him playing golf, using a typewriter, dressing himself, driving a car. Pictures of a bicycle Pullman, an enormously tall fig tree, growing through the wall of a Chicago bakery, trick fishing with a window shade roller used as a reel, some expert shooting. Excellent. Children and family.

VITAPHONE CASINO. Vita. The performers are Paul Dukes, Babs Ryan, Buster West, Radio Rubes. Fair for family.

SCREEN SOUVENIR No. 4. Col. Hollywood people of the past and present introduced by Harriet Parson. The fine pictures of the polo game won by Will Rogers and his son on the last Sunday of his life is a valuable memento. Excellent for all.

FLOWERS FOR MADAME. Vita. A lovely fantasy of flowers as they pass in parade to be judged in a contest. Fine color effects. Excellent for all.

POPULAR SCIENCE No. 2. Para. Subjects: Tarantulas and black spiders, an up-to-date bus, beer in cans, atmospheric clock, flowers made from wood pulp, San Francisco bridge, airplane testing. Excellent. All ages.

TROUBLE IN TOYLAND. Vita. Children rebel at being entertained by others and put on a revue in sophisticated style. Clever children in the typical show-off entertainment. Only fair.

SORORITY BLUES. Fox. Unless she can pass her examinations, a college girl can not play on the team. On the rather absurd pretext that she cannot concentrate without a radio, her friends put on a radio skit when her own set fades out. Only fair for any age.

TOPICS OF THE DAY. No. 2. R.K.O. Clever depiction of the reactions of people and animals to emotional stimuli; swordsmanship with shots of the Olympic fencing team; skiing in the Bavarian Alps. Excellent for all.

GANGSTERS OF THE DEEP. Fox. Fishing for dangerous fish of the deep sea: sharks, whales and tuna. Good. Family.

BROADWAY HIGHLIGHTS. No. 5. Para. The night life of Paradise Restaurant; a dinner for noted sportsmen; the rehearsal of "Jumbo" and some scenes of the opening night. Good. Family.

RADIO RHAPSODY. Para. Johnny Green scans a radio poll, selects the most popular types of music and shows the different kinds of people who enjoy each type. Good. Family.

EXCURSIONS IN SCIENCE. G.E. Shows scientific research in electricity, magnets, walking oil, rickety oil, energetic light. Good. Family.

IRVING COBB'S NEWS LAUGHS. No. 1. The best story of the week from the press of the world is given, also some rather ancient and feeble jokes. Fair for family.

MARCH OF TIME No. 9. R.K.O. Subjects include: Townsend Plan; Japan-China crisis in North China; U. S. Secret Service and Coast Guard in their fight against narcotic smugglers.

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MOTION PICTURE REVIEWS

THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

FEBRUARY 1936

For practical use we suggest filing bulletins where they may be easily accessible for reference. Films are not released simultaneously over the country. You will need these reviews for constant reference.

Feature Films Reviewed in this Issue

*Anything Goes
*Bar 20 Rides Again
*Brides Are Like That
Colleen
Collegiate
Dangerous Waters
Exclusive Story
*Fang and Claw
*First a Girl
*Gentle Julia
*The Ghost Goes West
Invisible Ray
The Lady Consents
*Love on a Bet
Muss 'Em Up
The New Gulliver
Road Gang
*Rose Marie
*Rose of the Rancho
*Song and Dance Man
*Strike Me Pink
*Timothy's Quest
Tough Guy
Three Live Ghosts

*Film suitable for family entertainment but not necessarily appropriate for children under 12 or for children unaccompanied by adults.

THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB
LOS ANGELES BRANCH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN
943 South Hoover Street ◈ Telephone DRexel 2177
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WEBBCRAFT PRINTERS, 2509 WEST WASHINGTON BLVD., LOS ANGELES

MOTION • PICTURE • REVIEWS

Published monthly by

THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB

LOS ANGELES BRANCH

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

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Address all communications to THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB, 943 South Hoover St., Los Angeles, Calif.

Advance Supplement is published and mailed approximately the 15th of each month.

10c Per Copy - - $1.00 Per Year

Vol. IX **FEBRUARY, 1936** **No. 2**

NOTE

With the permission of the Public Schools of Denver, Colorado, we are reprinting a portion of a pamphlet by Katherine Anne Ommaney, instructor of dramatics at North High School. It seems that it provides a most valuable set of standards by which to measure one's critical faculty and consequently one's ability to appreciate pictures.—THE EDITORS.

HOW TO ENJOY MOTION PICTURES

The Relation of the Motion Picture to Youth and the School

Schools which conscientiously seek to provide for young people a curriculum related to real life situations and needs cannot avoid giving consideration to current motion pictures. The material which follows is intended to assist teachers in giving instruction relative to motion pictures.

It is not the purpose of school instruction relative to the motion picture to advertise any picture or to encourage or discourage attendance. The public schools must not serve as an advertising medium. Rather, the purpose is to utilize the experiences which attendance at moving pictures provides for the development of critical intelligent taste.

Because the motion picture plays so important a part in shaping the standards of conduct and attitudes of mind of the American youth, our public schools should make a very definite effort to cooperate with the home and other institutions in seeking to help young people to develop an appreciation of the better films. The enthusiasm of pupils for the screen plays should also serve to vitalize classwork.

Why Do We Go to the Theatre?

Undoubtedly the average person goes to the theatre to be amused and entertained, and to be released for a short time from the dull routine of daily life. This need not, however, be the only end served by moving picture attendance. The individual who chooses with care the plays he attends will also secure such satisfactions as the following:

Enjoyment of the work of first-class dramatists, producers, and actors;

Increased appreciation of how people of all types face problems common to all humanity;

Growth in ability to distinguish between the false standards of life, as frequently depicted on the screen, and the real values of daily experiences;

Power to analyze a play intelligently and to enjoy the aesthetic values of artistic acting, settings, costumes, and photography.

Such an individual retains his individuality and powers of judgment in the most exciting moments of a picture. He refuses to become "just eyes and ears."

Some Why's, What's, and How's of the Moving Picture World

Anyone attending a moving picture should ask himself Why am I going? What shall I look for? and How am I affected? The following standards should make for intelligent enjoyment of a picture.

A GOOD PICTURE. Tells a plausible, interesting story in a series of related events which rise to a gripping climax and work out to a logical conclusion.

Interprets problems, serious or otherwise, which people meet in real life, and shows the consequences of their methods of facing them;

Shows intelligent people reacting consistently and logically at crucial moments in their life experience;

Presents constructive ideas of life which enrich spiritual concepts and inspire admirable conduct;

Depicts with accuracy and effectiveness whatever phase of life is portrayed, but does not depend for its humor upon unjust caricature of types, classes, or races.

A GOOD ACTOR. Creates a living personality which arouses a definite emotional response from the onlooker;

Uses his voice, body, and talent effectively and artistically to depict the immediate role he is assuming. He never exploits his own personality, however charming and appealing it may be;

Cooperates with the director and other actors in the presentation of the play, always focussing the attention of the audience upon the center of interest rather than upon himself;

Possesses a screen personality, flexible voice, and an intelligent understanding of people and human relations.

A GOOD PRODUCER. Selects, adapts, and casts a play with discrimination and judgment;

Employs every technical device to create a perfect coordination of technicians and actors, settings and effects which correctly and sympathetically present the play and its message to the best advantage;

Presents accurately and artistically the correct background of sets and music to arouse the proper emotional response through which the purpose of the play may be conveyed;

Inspires his actors, combined in a well-balanced cast, to create vital characters, by means of drawing out their ability and assisting them with effective costumes and make-up;

A GOOD MOVIE FAN. Selects his theatrical fare with taste and discrimination, refusing to be lured by false advertising and unintelligent judgment of others;

Follows critical reviews and classifications of plays in reputable magazines and newspapers;

Loses himself in the enjoyment of a fine play, beautiful sets, or great acting without allowing his critical judgment of unimportant details to spoil real art for him. On the other hand, he does not accept sentimental drivel, unethical conduct, and false standards of life just because other people do;

Follows the activities of the best producers, dramatists, and actors, comparing and analyzing their methods, and encouraging their work by contributing only to the box-office returns of first-class pictures.

FEATURE FILMS

ANYTHING GOES » »

Bing Crosby, Ethel Merman, Charlie Ruggles, Ida Lupino. Direction by Lewis Milestone. Paramount.

Much of the amusing satire of the stage version of "Anything Goes" has been left out, its fast tempo slowed down and some of the best original sayings omitted. The result is a series of episodes loosely strung together giving the effect of a rather mediocre vaudeville performance. Bing Crosby, Ethel Merman, and Charlie Ruggles are not unusual, but the sets and photography are excellent. On the whole, one feels that the director has somehow missed the possibilities in his material and succeeded only in grinding out just another of those musical comedies.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Harmless **Children, 8 to 12** Harmless

BRIDES ARE LIKE THAT » »

Ross Alexander, Anita Louise, Joseph Cawthorn, Richard Purcell. From the play "Applesauce" by Barry Conners. Direction by William McGann. First National.

The "moral" of this gay, inconsequential, little story is that cheerful, well-meant flattery often goes farther than dour common sense. Ross Alexander supplies the flattery, Richard Purcell, the common sense and Anita Louise, the love interest. The cast is so amusing and the situations so full of human interest that one gladly swallows any slight improbability as to story. The picture has genuine lighthearted humor, deft direction and a convincing sense of human values.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good **Children, 8 to 12** Yes

BAR 20 RIDES AGAIN » »

William Boyd, Jimmy Ellison, Frank McGlynn, Jr., Harry Worth, Jean Rouverol. Direction by Howard Bretherton. Para.

To anyone who has a soft spot in his heart for "westerns" we recommend this "Hop Along Cassidy" picture. The scenery is gorgeous, the story is simple, the horsemanship is beyond reproach. A cattle rustler is disposed of, the right man wins the girl, and the brave and honest cowboy puts another notch on his gun.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good **Children, 8 to 12** Good

COLLEEN » »

Dick Powell, Ruby Keeler, Jack Oakie, Joan Blondell, Hugh Herbert, Louise Fazenda. From a story by Robert Lord. Screen play by Peter Milne and F. Hugh. Direction by Alfred E. Green. Warner Bros.

The stress of our everyday lives is often so great that we feel the need for a type of relaxation that requires no mental or physical effort. This picture should fulfill that need. It is a musical comedy that is highly entertaining, with good dialogue and unlimited buffoonery. It is lengthy, of necessity, for it accommodates an elaborate fashion show, many dance numbers, several songs by Dick Powell as well as a preposterous plot which does its best to hold all these together in one cohesive unit. If it fails, it is because the picture is primarily a vehicle for the diversified talents of the cast.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fair **Children, 8 to 12** Boresome

COLLEGIATE » »

Joe Penner, Jack Oakie, Ned Sparks, Frances Langford. From a story by Alice Duer Miller. Screen play by Walter DeLeon and Francis Martin. Direction by Ralph Murphy. Paramount.

Although most of the reliable devices for producing comedy effects are used, this farce remains slow-moving and vacuous. It concerns a hard-drinking Broadway playboy who inherits a girls' school. He is decidedly lacking in strength of character but when challenged proves himself capable of big things. He gives up drinking and changes the school to a charm school where rhythmatic is featured instead of arithmetic. Jack Oakie vacillates between hero and zany and does neither very well. The plot is generously interspersed with music, dancing and the absurdities of Joe Penner. While much goes on, nothing really happens.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Passable **Children, 8 to 12** No

DANGEROUS WATERS » »

Jack Holt, Grace Bradley, Robert Armstrong. From the story "Glory Hole" by Theodore Reeves. Direction by Lambert Hillyer. Universal.

A captain surmounts the hazards of fire on shipboard, disloyal crews and the schemes of dishonest owners to wreck his ship for the in-

surance. The picture is not convincing, and a discordant note is the introduction of a minor plot dealing with the hero's marital difficulties.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Poor **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

EXCLUSIVE STORY » »

Franchot Tone, Madge Evans, Stuart Erwin, Joseph Calleia. From the story by Martin Mooney. Screen play by Michael Fessier. Direction by George B. Seitz. M-G-M.

The author of this script undoubtedly wished to demonstrate that no matter what impunity a racketeer might believe himself to have, some act, more heinous than others, will seal his doom. This is just another way of saying, "Crime doesn't pay." Franchot Tone and Stuart Erwin, as newspaper reporters on the side of the law, make rather flimsy dramatic props for Joseph Calleia's lucid and vivid delineation of the gangster. The picture is tensely gripping because most of the sequences are inspired by sensational news items such as the burning of the ill-fated *Morro Castle*. It exposes the "numbers racket" and describes the brute force which is used to restrain people from telling what they know. However, it is too loosely wrought, dramatically, to make the town prick up its ears. There is much violence, brutality and horror, but one assumes that no great disaster will befall the nice young man and the pretty girl, and none does.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Unsuited **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

FANG AND CLAW » »

Director and narrator: Frank Buck. Photography by Nicholas Cavaliere and Harry E. Squire. Van Buren Corporation. Released by R.K.O.-Radio.

This is the picture of Frank Buck's latest expedition to the Asiatic jungles to capture monkeys, pythons, tigers and other specimens for zoos in America. From several standpoints it is one of the best of the animal films. There has been no attempt to create thrills by pitting one ferocious creature against another, but the dangers are shown as they actually exist, for although the methods of capture are very ingenious, no one can doubt that a careless move would entail disaster. Against the beautiful background of the jungle the larger animals move with stealth or majesty, and the monkeys come frolicking down from the trees to provide a dash of natural humor. Frank Buck's narrative is instructive and well-expressed.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent **Children, 8 to 12** Good

FIRST A GIRL » »

Jessie Mathews, Sonnie Hale. Screen story by Marjorie Gaffney. British-Gaumont. Direction by Victor Saville.

A girl impersonating a boy impersonating a girl! It sounds confusing and in fact it is a bit complicated for the young lady who finds that she can be herself only on the stage when she is in a girl's "disguise." For the audience it is all very lively and diverting. The idea is novel, and Jessie Mathews is an alluring English actress who sings and dances in a very engaging manner. Sonnie Hale's talents for comedy add greatly to the story. The settings on the French Riviera are lovely. As a whole the production is a very enjoyable one.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good **Children, 8 to 12** A matter of taste

▼

GENTLE JULIA » »

Jane Withers, Tom Brown, Marsha Hunt, Jackie Searl. From the novel by Booth Tarkington. Screen play by Lamar Trotti. Direction by John Blystone. Twentieth Century-Fox.

This photoplay is even lighter in tone than the novel from which it is adapted. The humorous side of life in a small town and the pranks of the little girl are stressed with the result that the picture is a good vehicle for Jane Withers in the role of an exceedingly precocious child who saves her lovely young aunt from an unfortunate marriage.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good **Children, 8 to 12** Yes

▼

THE GHOST GOES WEST » »

Robert Donat, Gene Palette, Jean Parker, Morton Selten. Direction by René Clair. London Films, Inc.

Here is sparkling satire, witty, gay and romantic. René Clair is the clever French director whose "Sous Les Toits de Paris" is perhaps his best known picture in America. His productions are shown in larger cities in this country but are rarely released generally, and it is a treat for us to be able to see this English film presented in a language which gives our audiences fuller appreciation of his brilliant style. The Ghost is a handsome Highlander who died some two hundred years ago under rather ignominious circumstances. He is doomed to wander until the embarrassment to his clan may be wiped out by an equal reproach to the MacLaggans. His engaging descendant, who is his twin in looks, finds the Ghost a most annoying hindrance to his plan to sell the run down castle. But an American nouveau riche millionaire

buys it, tears it down and transports it stone by stone to Florida, accompanied by the ever vigilant and unhappy Ghost. The Ghost's arrival in America, his reactions to this country, the attitude of the public and the press to the story presented give opportunity for hilarious comedy. Even Washington questions the legality of admitting a foreign ghost. It is immensely comic. To comment on particular situations might take from their unexpected gaiety, but it cleverly lampoons, along with Scotch weaknesses, many of our own national frailties, exaggerated of course, but not too much to be fully appreciated and enjoyed. Robert Donat plays the dual roles with fine understanding of the different values. Gene Pallette is perfect as the millionaire whose taste is so comically gauche, Jean Parker is a lovely heroine, and minor roles are outstanding in their suitability. Do not overlook this amusing entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fine — **Children, 8 to 12** Good fun

▼

IF YOU COULD ONLY COOK » »

Herbert Marshall, Jean Arthur, Leo Carrillo. Direction by William Seiter. Columbia.

A professor's daughter met a designer of automobiles on a park bench. She said, "Let's get a job as cook and butler." He said, "Certainly," and they suddenly found themselves employed in the household of a wicked but sentimental bootlegger. The consequences were both amusing and unexpected. The plot thus outlined reads like the good old game called "Consequences" and is just as foolish, but due to a pleasing cast and capable handling, the film is entertaining.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Amusing — **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

INVISIBLE RAY » »

Karloff, Bela Lugosi, Frances Drake, Frank Lawton, Violet K. Cooper. Direction by Lambert Hillyer. Original story by Howard Higgin and Douglas Hodges. Universal.

Reminiscent of some of H. G. Wells' novels of strange discovery, this is a pseudo-scientific mystery tale of a man who unearths a new, super-powerful element, becomes gradually mad and uses it for destructive purposes. Although some excellent astronomical slides are used to enhance credibility, the whole idea is based on false principles of science. The mystery and suspense are well sustained and the parts are very well played. The opening scenes and those in the doctor's house at the close are especially cleverly directed with an eye to fine photographic effects, and throughout the film it is the extraordinary which is emphasized rather than the quality of horror.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 For the older group — **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

THE LADY CONSENTS » »

Ann Harding, Herbert Marshall, Margaret Lindsay, Walter Abel, Edward Ellis. Direction by Stephen Roberts. R.K.O.

Like most pictures in which Ann Harding appears this has so much that is pleasant to contemplate that one is apt to overlook the extremely sophisticated and ultra modern social standards upon which the plot is based. It is the story of a young doctor and his wife. The husband is intrigued by a rather obvious vampire, and the wife grants him a divorce though she still loves him. After he discovers the shallow and selfish character of his new wife he is ready to be rescued by wife number one, and all ends happily. The touching, warm and human relationship of the first wife and her father-in-law gives the picture a sincerity that it might otherwise lack. It is beautifully set, well acted and has an abundance of humor and pathos.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too mature — **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

LOVE ON A BET » »

Gene Raymond, Wendy Barrie, Helen Broderick, William Collier. Direction by Leigh Jarson. R.K.O.

"Love on a Bet" is a light farce of modern American life bearing a resemblance to that type of comedy which holds "It Happened One Night" as its pattern for assembling improbable situations and fast-flying wisecracks into an amusing but insignificant and inconsequential piece of entertainment. A feeling of freshness and brightness runs through the film. In order to prove that a certain play contains situations which are possible in real life, a would-be playwright makes a wager with his uncle that he can start from New York penniless in his underwear and arrive at Los Angeles, within ten days, with clothes, one hundred dollars and a fiancée. We still may believe with the skeptical uncle that the trick is impossible, but it makes an amusing movie.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good — **Children, 8 to 12** Little interest

▼

MUSS 'EM UP » »

Preston Foster, Margaret Callahan, Alan Mowbray, Ralph Morgan. From the novel by James Edward Grant. Screen play by Erwin Gelsey. Direction by Charles Vidor. R.K.O.

The name of the picture is a warning which

should be heeded, for plot, characters and motives are so thoroughly messed up in this mystery melodrama that one loses interest in the characters and in the outcome. Methods employed by the detectives are callous and often brutalizing, and yet they are proffered in the film as fine titbits of humor. It is a matter of bad judgment to put actors with such good records as Alan Mowbray, Ralph Morgan and Preston Foster, in this unsatisfactory production.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No; low ethical standards

Children, 8 to 12 No indeed

▼

THE NEW GULLIVER » »

Direction by A. Ptuschka. Amkino.

Like most Russian pictures, this one is preeminently designed to display the superiority of the new order over the old. The facile, pliant hand of the propagandist is always insidiously present (both figuratively and literally) in the social transmutations which we see, for Gulliver is the only human being, the other characters being puppets. Much of the esthetic value is lost in the urge to place a distinctly Soviet message before the audience. The dialogue is Russian, the subtitles, English. To anyone interested in puppetry it is a fascinating display of that art.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Difficult to follow

Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

ROSE MARIE » »

Jeanette MacDonald, Nelson Eddy. Based on the stage production of Arthur Hammerstein from the play by Otto A. Harbach and Oscar Hammerstein II. Music by Rudolph Friml and Herbert Stothart. Direction by W. S. Van Dyke. M-G-M.

No motif could be more romantic for a light opera than the love of a Canadian mounted policeman for a beautiful lady whose brother is a fugitive. That the lady sings for a living and the man for pleasure is ample reason for music, and the gorgeous mountain scenery is a perfect background for romance. This charming revival of a popular opera is destined to delight both those who saw it on the stage and those to whom it is new.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent

Children, 8 to 12 Good

▼

ROAD GANG » »

Donald Woods, Kay Linaker, Carlysle Moore, Jr. Direction by Louis King. First National.

Exposing the results of the misuse of power in the hands of an evil political dictator and the horrible conditions in prison road camps, this film goes to such lengths of brutal reality that to most people it will be revolting. As entertainment it is impossible, but as the shock necessary to waken a lethargic public to the necessity for reform in certain quarters, it may be quite successful. The story tells of the fate that overtakes two reporters when they attempt to expose a politician whose activities bear a strong resemblance to the reputed machinations of the late Huey Long. Some people will no doubt think it greatly exaggerated. It is to be hoped that the conditions portrayed are at least unusual.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 By no means

Children, 8 to 12 Horrible

▼

ROSE OF THE RANCHO » »

John Boles, Gladys Swarthout, Charles Bickford, Willie Howard. Direction by Marion Gering. Paramount.

This romantic opera of the days of the Dons in California should be ideal screen material. It is, however, somewhat disappointing. The beginning particularly is stiff and stilted as though it were trying to follow the tradition of opera rather than the more facile medium of the cinema. Miss Swarthout, though her voice is clear and lovely, fails to register the fire and animation required by her role. The production is pleasing chiefly for its atmosphere, the colorful costumes, the lovely scenery and the romantic life of the early Spanish settlers. These are charmingly reproduced, but much of the music comes as an interruption to the drama rather than as an integral part of the picture.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Passably interesting

Children, 8 to 12 Little interest

▼

SONG AND DANCE MAN » »

Claire Trevor, Paul Kelly, Michael Whalen, Ruth Donnelly. Based on the play by George M. Cohen. Direction by Allan Dwan. Twentieth Century-Fox.

A pretty dancer, a braggart partner and a millionaire lover are the principals in this play which follows an upward trend from the board stage of small-time vaudeville to the dazzling footlights of Broadway. Values are wholesome, since honest endeavor and talent win reward, and selfishness is transmuted to altruism. Like many pictures of the type, it is raised above the commonplace by such pleasant trimmings as good dialogue, catchy music, effective photography and well-planned settings.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes

Children, 8 to 12 Possible

STRIKE ME PINK » »

Eddie Cantor, Ethel Merman, Parkyakarkus, Sally Eilers. Direction by Norman Taurog. Goldwyn-M-G-M.

Good music, clever dance ensembles, a wild chase up and down the track of a roller coaster, ridiculous characters and some really funny gags make this breezy nonsensical picture very entertaining. The setting is an amusement park managed by an exceedingly timid and not very bright young man. With the aid of a book on personality the young man transforms himself into a daredevil, routs a gang of racketeers and wins the heart of the owner's daughter.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent

Children, 8 to 12 Excellent

TIMOTHY'S QUEST » »

Eleanore Whitney, Tom Keene, Dickie Moore, Virginia Weidler, Sally Martin, J. M. Kerrigan, Irene Franklin. From the novel by Kate Douglas Wiggin. Direction by Charles Barton. Paramount.

The book from which this picture was made is not one of Miss Wiggin's most popular novels probably because in it too much adult philosophy is ascribed to the child characters. The picture, however, presents many aspects that will be pleasing to children. It tells the story of a little orphan boy who runs away from a cruel couple with whom he has been living and takes his small sister with him. They find a new home and loving care on a farm which, on the screen, will seem like heaven to many a city child as it did to the little orphans in the story. For adults the charm of the picture lies in its simplicity. The plot may be challenged for sentimentality and for dependence on conditions which no longer exist but once you get into the spirit of the thing, you see the world through the small boy's eyes and react with him to all that happens. Little Dickie Moore gives his usual earnest and unselfconscious performance which cannot fail to touch the hearts of the audience.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent

Children, 8 to 12 Excellent

TOUGH GUY » »

Jackie Cooper, Joseph Calleia, Jean Hersholt, Rin-Tin-Tin, Jr. Direction by Chester M. Franklin. M-G-M.

With naive sentimentality possible only to Hollywood, we are asked to believe (and weep over) the fact that a hardened criminal experiences a complete change of heart because of the love of a boy for his dog. Joseph Calleia is most convincing as "The Tough Guy" who in the end loses his life rescuing Jackie Cooper and his pal Rin-Tin-Tin, Jr. It is an exciting melodrama full of tense moments. The three principals, Joseph Calleia, Jackie Cooper and Rin-Tin-Tin, Jr., deserve a better opportunity to display their very real talents unhampered by too much hokum.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 False values

Children, 8 to 12 False values; too emotional

THREE LIVE GHOSTS » »

Richard Arlen, Beryl Mercer, Claude Allister, Charles McNaughton. From the play by Frederick S. Isham. Screen play by C. Gardner Sullivan. Direction by H. Bruce Humberstone. M-G-M.

Three men return from the war to find themselves listed as dead. For one reason or another, it seems advisable for two of them to remain so. The third is shell-shocked and cannot identify himself. His eccentricities provide some amusing complications and his return to normalcy solves everyone's problems. The entertainment value of this light comedy depends on acting which shows more than ordinary perception, and direction which is deft and capable. Its weakness lies in the theme. This is not sufficiently strong to move an audience deeply. However, it is amusing enough to be acceptable as the other half of a double billing.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Doubtful

Children, 8 to 12 Unsuited

SHORT SUBJECTS

CARTOONS

KANNIBAL KAPERS. Krazy Kat. Col. This pictures the feline on a cannibal isle, embellished with a Cocoanut Grove, where night club entertainment is in vogue. It is poorly done and not recommended.

THE FIRE ALARM. Looneytoon. Vita. While their mother goes shopping, two children are left in a fire station to be cared for by an uncle. They get into a great deal of mischief and cause much damage. Poor for any age.

THE MAYFLOWER. Terrytoon. Fox. This caricature of the landing of the Mayflower, and the life of the Pilgrims is in very poor taste. Not recommended.

LITTLE NOBODY. Boop. Para. Betty has a nondescript cur, which is scorned by the mistress of a pedigreed dog, until Betty's canine proves a hero and rescues the aristocrat. Clever drawings. Good for family, children.

MOLLY MOO AND RIP VAN WINKLER. K.O. Molly Moo enters a drinking bout of the gnomes and awakens Rip as she plays ten pins. In spite of the excellent color, anecdotes are poorly executed, and it is not worth seeing. No for family and children.

FEUD. Terrytoon. Fox. In Hill-Billy settings a cock and hen attend a barn dance at Goat Inn. Only fair for family and children.

SCRAPPY'S BOY SCOUT. Scrappy enters the Boy Scout field and furnishes good fun for family, children.

MICKEY'S POLO TEAM. U.A. This color film of a polo game between Mickey's team and one made up of movie stars with actual likenesses of Jack Holt, Charlie Chaplin, the Marx Brothers and Laurel and Hardy, is done with technical skill and is very amusing. Excellent. Family, children.

VIM, VIGOR AND VITALITY. Para. Popeye goes in for health classes. Good for family and children.

BROKEN TOYS. Silly Symphony. U.A. An assortment of disfigured toys, some with faces of movie stars, are rejuvenated. This is a good cartoon with the usual fine color combinations. Children, family.

I WANNA PLAY HOUSE. Vita. The drawings are lively and the color very pleasing, but the plot is poorly conceived. It concerns two bear cubs who break into a trailer, one of them gets tipsy on apple cider; they inadvertantly start the machine which goes careening down a slope. Fair for family.

SOMEWHERE IN DREAMLAND. Color Classic. Para. Two waifs who have spent the day collecting scraps of firewood go to sleep and dream of all the things they desire: ice-cream cones, candy, toys and at last a beautiful bed-room. When they awake they find that the neighboring tradesmen have brought them toys and a feast. Charming for children and family.

MONKEY WRETCHES. Oswald. Univ. Oswald buys three monkeys under protest for his second hand shop, and they cause such havoc that he is willing to pay a large sum to have them taken away. Fair for family.

RUN SHEEP RUN. M-G-M. A little darkey cares for three white sheep and one black, the last of which is obstreperous until quelled by clever masquerading by the dog and the other sheep. Good color picture for family and children.

SPORTS

CREW RACING. M-G-M. This is a good account by Pete Smith of the training of college racing crews with illustrations from the various teams. All ages.

JAI ALAI. Fox. Pictures of the "fastest game in the world" resembling handball and tennis, as it is played in Spain and Mexico. Good for all.

TRAVEL

MODERN TOKIO. M-G-M. This is a very lovely Technicolor with a good description of Tokio. Excellent for all.

VARIETY

PARAMOUNT PICTORIAL No. 5. This includes Manhattan Rhapsody, unusual pictures of New York skyscrapers taken from the air and from various angles; Animal Buddies, queerly assorted animals living as boon companions; Doana Powell, maker of masks. Good for all ages.

ETIQUETTE. Easy Aces. R.K.O. Demonstrations of etiquette by the well-known pair. This is poor.

ACCENT ON GIRLS. Para. Sophisticated pictures of night club numbers and a girls' orchestra. Fair for adults.

STARS OF TOMORROW. Col. Another exposition of the work of amateurs. Fair for all ages.

TOPICS OF THE DAY No. 3. R.K.O. Subjects include canine explorers, the huskies of the Yukon, a study of masculine handwriting and visual music. Interesting for all.

SEEING NELLIE HOME. Fox. An old time barn dance and basket supper accompanied by many old songs. Good. All ages.

WINTER MAGIC. Fox. Here are a series of beautiful snow scenes, those of Yellowstone being outstanding. All ages. Excellent.

POPULAR SCIENCE No. 3. Para. This includes airplane locating apparatus, electric beauty gadgets, desert ice, abalone pearl culture, automatic secretary, study of crystals, and a hitch-hiker, carrying an empty gas can to deceive motorists. Very interesting for all.

PRIMITIVE PITCAIRN. M-G-M. Excellent narrative accompanies these scenes of Pitcairn Island. All ages.

FILMING FEMININE HEADLINERS. Fox. Athletic women all over the world, on land and sea and in the air. Fine for all.

GOING PLACES No. 4. Univ. Pictures of Niagara Falls and the Arabian horses at the Kellogg farm. Excellent. All ages.

EASY PICKINGS. Fox. The Cabin Kids perform on a ferry boat to the great delight of the passengers. Good Song Hit for all.

STRANGER THAN FICTION. No. 14. Univ. Subjects: Japanese cormorant fishing, Texas woman of fifty-five who runs five miles a day, water power automobiles, historic Fort Montgomery, bee expert who allows the bees to form a beard on his face, armless man who plays a guitar and a harmonica at the same time. Excellent for all ages.

MARCH OF TIME No. 10. R.K.O. South Pacific Islands, Jarvis, Baker and Howland, where the U. S. government is collecting data on air conditions before establishing an Hawaii to New Zealand airline; Deibler, the national executioner of France: the Tennessee Valley before and after the work of T.V.A. with a debate on public and private control of electricity. This is one of the best of the series.

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THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

MARCH 1936

For practical use we suggest filing bulletins where they may be easily accessible for reference. Films are not released simultaneously over the country. You will need these reviews for constant reference.

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*The Voice of Bugle Ann
The Walking Dead
Woman Trap
*Yellow Dust

*Film suitable for family entertainment but not necessarily appropriate for children under 12 or for children unaccompanied by adults.

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LOS ANGELES BRANCH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN
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WEBBCRAFT PRINTERS, 2509 WEST WASHINGTON BLVD., LOS ANGELES

MOTION • PICTURE • REVIEWS

Published monthly by

THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB

LOS ANGELES BRANCH

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10c Per Copy - - $1.00 Per Year

Vol. IX **MARCH, 1936** **No. 3**

FEATURE FILMS

BOULDER DAM » »

Ross Alexander, Patricia Ellis, Lyle Talbot, George Breakston. Screen play by Sy Bartlett and Ralph Block. Based on story "Boulder Dam" by Dan M. Templin. Director, Frank McDonald. Warner Bros.

The stupendous background of Boulder Dam gives its title to this homespun melodrama, and the great project is a factor in the regeneration of the principal character. The action concerns a group of laborers on the dam, and several heroic rescues are genuinely thrilling. The plot taxes one's credulity at times but is refreshing in its simplicity. Ross Alexander takes the honors for his portrayal of a worthless youth who becomes a man through his love for a girl and the spirit of loyalty to his job.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good **Children, 8 to 12** Good

THE COUNTRY DOCTOR » »

The Dione Quintuplets, Jean Hersholt, Dorothy Peterson, Robert Barrat, Montagu Love, Michael Whalen, June Lang. Direction by Henry King. Screen play by Sonya Levien. Original story by Charles E. Blake. Darryl F. Zanuck in charge of production. Twentieth Century-Fox.

If you expect to see a picture entirely dependent upon the fascinating quintuplets for entertainment you will be surprised, for this story is extremely entertaining in itself. It is a sympathetic portrayal of a simple, kindly, efficient, country doctor (perfectly played by Jean Hersholt) who has been practicing for thirty-five years in a northern Canadian logging camp without adequate facilities for the competent care of those in the community. A diphtheria epidemic among the children left stranded away from communication with the world during the long winter months creates the dramatic climax, but realistically enough it is the emotionally stirring arrival of the quintuplets which accomplishes what no less theatrical a situation could. The cast is preeminent, Dorothy Peterson, Slim Summerville and others being outstanding in their roles. The humor of the birth sequence is uproarious, and the scenes of the adorable little girls playing in their nursery with the doctor on their second birthday is perfectly delightful. It is an uniquely entertaining film.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good **Children, 8 to 12** Very emotional in scenes of illness; not advised

DESIRE » »

Marlene Dietrich, Gary Cooper, John Halliday, William Frawley, Ernest Cossart, Akim Tamiroff, Alan Mowbray, Zeffie Tilbury. Direction by Frank Borzage. Screen play by Edwin Justus Mayer, Waldemar Young and Samuel Hoffenstein. Based upon a comedy by Hans Szekely and R. A. Stemmle. Para.

Why this film should be called "Desire"

is more than we can fathom unless the producers thought such a title would please the followers of Marlene Dietrich's former roles. This is a very light comedy, and Miss Dietrich, while preserving her low emotional voice and her exotic mode of dress, has added a twinkle to her eye. She plays the part of a jewel thief who, posing as a countess, perpetrates a clever hoax and makes off with an enormously valuable pearl necklace. Her escape from France to Spain is impeded by a meeting with a young engineer from Detroit who is taking a vacation by motor. Of course the two fall in love, and the girl reforms after a glamorous sojourn with her lover at a castle in Spain. We could not forgive the scenarist if he had written this in a serious vein. However it is subtly comic and ultra sophisticated, not so torrid and not so dull as one might expect from the title. The cast is excellent, and the settings are lovely.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too sophisticated — **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

DRIFT FENCE » »

"Buster" Crabbe, Katherine De Mille, Tom Keene. From a book by Zane Grey. Direction by Otho Lovering. Paramount.

A routine Western with the old theme of cattle rustling and fights over a boundary fence supplying the motives for a series of shooting affrays in which many of the characters are killed. The usual love story is present as are also bits of humor supplied by a dude from New York and a Chinese cook. Even though violent death is an indispensable adjunct of pictures dealing with the lawlessness of the frontier, this film makes murder seem too casual and too easily justified.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Questionable — **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

EVERY SATURDAY NIGHT » »

Jed Prouty, Spring Byington, June Lang, Florence Roberts, Kenneth Howell, George Ernest, June Carlson, William Mahan. Based on the play by Katherine Kavanaugh. Direction by James Tinling. Twentieth Century-Fox.

The everyday life of a certain type of American family is quite accurately mirrored in this picture. The characters are not particularly interesting in themselves, and the events are neither dramatic or unusual, but the film is interesting because of its success in catching the exact reflection of human beings whose prototypes everyone knows in real life. It tells a simple story of how a too exacting father eventually gains a better understanding of his children.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining — **Children, 8 to 12** Mature

▼

FOLLOW THE FLEET » »

Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, Randolph Scott, Harriet Hilliard, Astrid Allwyn. From the play "Shore Leave" by Hubert Osborne. Screen play by Dwight Taylor and Allan Scott. Direction by Mark Sandrich. R.K.O.

Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers are teamed again in a buoyant musical comedy, punctuated by the patter of their inimitable feet. Less sophisticated and less brilliant than "Top Hat" and a shade too long, it has nevertheless many of the ingredients which made this film successful: charming photography, skillful use of episode, clever rythmic songs, an agreeable cast. Astaire's facial expressions are gaily absurd; Ginger Rogers enters wholeheartedly into the comedy as well as the difficult dance variations; Randolph Scott and Harriet Hilliard make an attractive pair, while Astrid Allwyn is unusually suave as the pleasure-seeking widow. The story, which commences on one of the beautiful, white U.S. battleships, follows the romantic adventures of two sailors and the girls they encounter on shore leave in San Francisco.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good — **Children, 8 to 12** Mature

▼

THE GARDEN MURDER CASE » »

Edmund Lowe, Virginia Bruce, Benita Hume. From the book by S. S. Van Dine. Direction by Edwin L. Marin. M-G-M.

S. S. Van Dine's book has been rather garbled in its adaptation for the screen, but for one who enjoys setting his mind to the task of unravelling mystery and does not demand literary or artistic values in pictures, this mystery tale may contain enough knotty problems to be considered entertaining. Philo Vance, super-detective, discovers who is responsible for three deaths. The subject of hypnotism, always intriguing to the lay mind, is treated pseudo-scientifically to further the mystery.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No — **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

HERE COMES TROUBLE » »

Paul Kelly, Arline Judge, Mona Barrie, Gregory Ratoff. From an original story by John Bright and Robert Tasker. Direction by Lewis Seiler. Twentieth Century-Fox.

This is a confusing account of the efforts of two sets of thieves to steal a valuable ruby which is being brought from New York

to Havana. Most of the action takes place on ship board where a noisy beauty shop employee, a wealthy drunken ne'er-do-well, crooks, sailors and a slick moll all take part in a game of "hunt the ruby." The production is a striking example of wasted effort.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No — **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

HER MASTER'S VOICE » »

Edward Everett Horton, Elizabeth Patterson, Laura Hope Crews, Grant Mitchell, Peggy Conklin. Direction by Joseph Santley. A Walter Wanger Production. Paramount.

When a young man loses his job and is therefore despised by his relatives, he is mistaken for a jewel of a servant by a wealthy visiting aunt and welcomed into her household. In an attempt to visit his wife he is neatly foiled. The situations are farcical, even uproarious during the sequences when he is forced to accompany his doting mistress as a groom on a spirited horse. It is an ideal vehicle for the particular talents of Horton, who is well supported.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Very entertaining — **Children, 8 to 12** Slight interest

▼

IT HAD TO HAPPEN » »

George Raft, Rosalind Russell, Leo Carrillo, Arline Judge. Direction by Roy Del Ruth. From a story by Rupert Hughes. Screen play by Howard Ellis Smith and Kathryn Scola. Twentieth Century-Fox.

Could this picture have been intended for satire? Anything can happen in America and sometimes does, but this production is hardly clever enough to put over its thesis, assuming that it has one. The character of an Italian immigrant speaking perfect English upon arrival, and immediately rising to complete political power because of his arrogance (called honesty in the film); a proud and beautiful heiress married to the banker villain; a lovable Italian compatriot of the hero retaining all his native mannerisms for humor; the imaginative characters coupled with rotten politics and a trip to Reno to benefit the hero and heroine, are too great a tax on one's endurance to appreciate whatever acting the leads are capable of presenting. Arline Judge seems the only *real* person on the screen.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No — **Children, 8 to 12** No

KLONDIKE ANNIE » »

Mae West, Victor McLaglen, Phillip Reed, Harold Huber, Helen J. Eddy. From a play by Mae West. Direction by Raoul Walsh. Paramount.

Mae West is credited with the authorship of this film story. If so she is kinder to herself than others might be. It is difficult to gage the entertainment value of the film for others, but for us she has been a buxom woman too long for us to be sympathetic when young heroes emote over her as a "lovely girl." "She Done Him Wrong" was justly successful because it recreated a period with frank honesty and unique originality. "Klondike Annie" is an attempt to duplicate that accomplishment. It fails because its motivation is insincere, and the humor is at the expense of religious missionaries. In escaping from a Chinese den in San Francisco the *Frisco Doll* murders her oriental lover and boards a ship bound for Nome. Hounded by the law, she adopts the costume of a kindly, sincere settlement worker who dies en route and whom we are led to believe has softened the *Doll's* heart. In Nome she assumes *Annie's* place in the church work, jazzes up the meetings, fills the treasury, corrupts the ideals of the handsome young Mounted Police officer who has recognized her, and then departs with her "ugly brute" lover, the captain of the steamship, to stand trial in San Francisco. Miss West's field is too limited to attempt to camouflage the type of character which she alone presents her public. In attempting to avoid censorship the production merely becomes ludicrous.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No! — **Children, 8 to 12** No!

▼

LADY OF SECRETS » »

Ruth Chatterton, Otto Kruger, Marian Marsh, Lionel Atwill. Direction by Marion Gering. Columbia.

Motherhood is a rose almost completely enmeshed in thorns to the type of woman Ruth Chatterton frequently portrays. A capable actress, she makes her sufferings and her problems vital in a drama which would be cheaply emotional with a less talented star. In this story she is thwarted in her desire to marry the man she loves, and with the aid of her parents rears her illegitimate child, who in turn wishes to marry against the worldly judgment of her elders. The happy ending weakens the plot, although as a mother she has paid through the years for her early transgression of the social law.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No — **Children, 8 to 12** No

LITTLE LORD FAUNTLEROY « «

Freddie Bartholomew, C. Aubrey Smith, Dolores Costello Barrymore, Una O'Connor, Guy Kibbee, Henry Stephensen, Mickey Rooney. From novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett. Direction by John Cromwell. David Selznick Production. United Artists.

Among all the output of childhood reading there remain books which become classics because of some rare quality which endears the characters to generations of readers. "Little Lord Fauntleroy" is such a book, and Mr. Selznick is to be commended for the vision which induced him to film it. Freddie Bartholomew, the little English actor, is of course an ideal person for the title role, and his manliness, his perfect diction and his personal charm have made the character of *Fauntleroy* a memorable one. He does not appear in curls and velvet suit and this concession to modernism is a tactful one. The story otherwise is faithfully translated and, lest you may have forgotten, it is a melodrama of no little interest, of real beauty, dignity, sincerity and good fun. The settings are Mid-Victorian and their accuracy adds infinitely to the enjoyment of audiences whose memory carries them back to approximately that period. Mrs. Barrymore is a gentle, lovely *Dearest,* and each member of the large cast deserves superlative commendation. But to C. Aubrey Smith and Freddie Bartholomew go highest honors. Mr. Smith is remarkable as the doughty Earl, his facial expressions defining without a word the conflicting emotions with which he struggles; while Freddie Bartholomew makes believable the role of a sheltered only child who has all the mannerisms of one brought up with few companions of his own age, but who is still a manly, normal boy. A story which might easily have become saccharine and sentimental avoids every pitfall because of tasteful direction and exceptional acting, and in addition this young English actor may well be called an ambassador of good will, interpreting to American children the customs and habits of another land. We recommend this as an ideal family treat.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Highly entertaining

Children, 8 to 12 Excellent

NOTE: Parents' Magazine has awarded Mr. Selznick a medal for "Little Lord Fauntleroy" as an outstanding picture for family audiences. This is Mr. Selznick's second award from Parents' Magazine, the previous medal being given for his production of "David Copperfield." He holds the unique honor of being the only producer to have received this distinction twice.

MARIE CHAPDELAINE » »

Madeliene Renaud, Jean Gabin. Adapted from Louis Hemon's famous novel of Canada. The French Prize Film.

The simple, sturdy life of French Canadian woodsmen and the staunch loyalty of a young girl to the traditions of her forefathers are the material from which this film is made. It is gorgeous in its photography, stirring in its depiction of the hardships of frontier life and beautiful in the simplicity and naturalness of its characters. The exquisitely spoken French is a treat even to foreign ears.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Mature

▼

MILKY WAY » »

Harold Lloyd, Adolphe Menjou, Veree Teasdale, Helen Mack, William Gargan. From a play by Lynn Root and Harry Clork. Direction by Leo McCarey. Paramount.

When a young milkman proves unusually adept at ducking blows, his ability is exploited by a prize-fight manager in a series of manipulated bouts. This provides spontaneous and sometimes riotous comedy for the talents of Harold Lloyd in his evolution from a timid delivery boy, devoted to his horse, Agnes, to the hero of the boxing ring. It is the usual Lloyd product, clean, fast-moving, laugh-provoking. The entire cast is good, notably Adolphe Menjou as a hardened pugilist, the antithesis of the type he usually portrays.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent

Children, 8 to 12 Excellent

▼

MODERN TIMES » »

Charles Chaplin, Paulette Goddard, Carter De Haven, Henry Bergman, Hank Mann, Tiny Sanford, Chester Conklin. Charles Chaplin, author and director. United Artists.

A pathetic little tramp known, for want of a stage name of his own, as "Charlie Chaplin," is to audiences of all nations the epitome of humor and pathos, the underdog whom we champion for his gallant spirit. We weep over the hopelessness of his struggle with a harsh world and laugh at his blundering, comical ways. To this reviewer it would seem entirely superfluous for the little chap to limit himself by the medium of verbal expression. As a mutual silence between friends often conveys more than a volume of words, so his pantomine is more fully interpreted by a sympathetic audience than any speech which would merely seem incongruous coming from a character who is not the counterpart of anyone yet symbolizes the frustrations of all. The current outlet for Chaplin's unique talent is a clever

satire predicting the effect of an over mechanized world upon its human inhabitants. It is the kind of picture which, if it amuses you while you are watching it, will give you an enormous amount of pleasure in recollection. Its combination of slapstick comedy, delicious satire, fantastic action and pure pathos would be hard to improve upon. Paulette Goddard is an ideal team mate for Chaplin. With a very small role counted in footage, she makes the *gamin* vividly alive and as refreshing as a cool breeze.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Very good

Children, 8 to 12 Good fun

▼

NEXT TIME WE LOVE » »

Margaret Sullavan, James Stewart, Ray Milland. From the story "Next Time We Live" by Ursula Parrott. Screen play by Melville Baker. Direction by Edward H. Griffith. Universal.

Seldom do two young people on the screen seem so intensely alive as Margaret Sullavan and James Stewart in this drama of a foreign newspaper correspondent and his actress wife. They seem to be talking to each other with no thought for dramatic effect in the important moments of life as well as in the little intimate every-day relationships. Separated for years at a time with half the world between them, their love and their faith in each other remain unshaken and undiminished. A practical-minded individual might suggest that Cicely's continued success before the footlights is too high a price to pay for the lost years of perfect companionship between two people who love and understand each other. Perhaps it is better not to delve too deeply into motives. Direction is sensitive; all parts are well played; it is a picture which will be remembered for youthful charm and the poignant expression of love fraught with sacrifice.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes, if interested

Children, 8 to 12 Too mature

▼

THE PREVIEW MURDER MYSTERY » »

Reginald Denny, Frances Drake, Gail Patrick, Rod LaRoque, George Barbier, Ian Keith, Conway Tearle. From an original story by Garnett Weston. Direction by Robert Florey. Paramount.

An average mystery tale doubles its effectiveness because the plot is laid in a studio interior where talking pictures are made. Vast stretches of dark buildings and empty sound stages shrouded in midnight stillness produce an eerie atmosphere, and there is sufficient explanation of cinema methods to convince the audience it is being made a party to the secrets of the industry. It is a fast-moving film with suitable cast.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes

Children, 8 to 12 Too exciting

▼

THE PRISONER OF SHARK ISLAND » »

Warner Baxter, Gloria Stuart, Claude Gillingwater, Arthur Byron, Harry Carey. Based on the life of Dr. Samuel A. Mudd. Direction by John Ford. Twentieth Century-Fox.

The story of Dr. Samuel Mudd imprisoned on Shark Island for his supposed conspiracy with Wilkes Booth in the assassination of Lincoln is reproduced on the screen with graphic and heart-stirring realism that places it high among the season's dramatic offerings. Too stern a theme and treatment for those in search of a mere evening's diversion, it will make a strong and poignant appeal to such as can accept their drama uncoated with sentimentality. A happy touch of comedy at the very end will restore the poise of the audience, but the general mood of the picture is one of cumulative tragedy. Superb work on the part of all the actors including the colored guards, gives the picture a dignity that makes its brutal scenes bearable and reclaims it from the cheapness of mere melodrama.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too brutal and sad

Children, 8 to 12 Emotionally upsetting

▼

SILLY BILLIES » »

Bert Wheeler, Robert Woolsey, Dorothy Lee, Harry Woods. Direction by Fred Guiol. R.K.O.

If you are a Wheeler and Woolsey addict, this is just what the doctor ordered, a madder, merrier, sillier picture than their last, with the great wide West of the covered-wagon era to offer the vicissitudes of fortune. They get into many kinds of trouble, are nearly hung for desperadoes, attacked by Indians and, as usual, emerge serene and triumphant in the end.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Excellent

▼

SNOWED UNDER » »

George Brent, Genevieve Tobin, Glenda Farrell, Patricia Ellis, Frank McHugh, John Eldredge. Story by Lawrence Saunders. Direction by Raymond Enright. First National.

Feather-soft flakes of snow descend upon a charming cottage in Connecticut in such quantities that it is buried in whiteness.

There all peace ends, for the domicile is inhabited by a noisy, bickering crew, who indulge in excessive motion to offset the lack of a satisfactory plot. The possession of a popular playwright, who is true to blondes, is contested by three women, while he endeavors to compose the third act of a play in a single night and strangely enough succeeds. The merit, which is slight, lies in the individuality of Genevieve Tobin and the caustic sallies of Glenda Farrell, who has some good lines, although the part she plays is tawdry.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 — No
Children, 8 to 12 — No

▼

SOAK THE RICH » »

Walter Connolly, Mary Taylor, John Howard. Direction by Ben Hecht and Charles Mac Arthur. Paramount.

This is a film untainted with propaganda, although the title used is a popular political slogan. Its broad satire is directed at the easy enthusiasms of youth, typified by an ardent group of university students who wish to turn the world into a perfect place to live in. The story has a simple plot, the appeal lying in clever dialogue with jibes at the absurdities of the radical program. It shows a keen understanding of visionary youth, following the rainbow of idealism and catching its feet in the slough of muddled theories.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 — Yes
Children, 8 to 12 — Too mature to interest

▼

THESE THREE » »

Miriam Hopkins, Merle Oberon, Joel McCrea, Bonita Granville, Marcia Mae Jones, Catherine Doucet, Alma Kruger. Original story and screen play by Lillian Hillman. Directed by William Wyler. Sam Goldwyn Production. United Artists.

The motivation of the original stage play "The Children's Hour," from which "These Three" is adapted, required radical changing for the screen, but the film is still powerful and intensely interesting. It is particularly unusual and worth seeing because of the amazing acting of two children, Bonita Granville and Marcia Mae Jones, who have the most difficult roles and play them superbly. It is a tragic story of how an evil little girl lied about the friendship of a doctor and a friend of his fianceé, so that bleak tragedy resulted for the three. It is not a happy theme, but it is a dynamic one, and so well done that few adults will care to miss it. The children's roles naturally attract first comment because they are so dramatic and emotional, but the mature characters are splendidly played, all portrayals requiring expert ability. The direction is excellent, moving swiftly and dramatically after the first reel.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 — Mature; but carrying its tragic lesson
Children, 8 to 12 — No; too emotional

▼

THE THREE GODFATHERS » »

Chester Morris, Lewis Stone, Walter Brennan, Irene Hervey, Baby Jean Kirchner. From a book by Peter B. Kyne. Screen play by Edward Paramore, Jr. and Manuel Seff. Direction by Richard Boleslawski. M-G-M.

This is Peter B. Kine's story of the three desperadoes who find the tiny babe of a dying mother on the desert sands and quickened by a latent spark of humanity give up their lives, one after another, that the child may survive. It is a sombre but well-sustained theme with good acting, especially on the part of Lewis Stone, who gives a sincere, finished performance as the bad man who has once known a life of culture and ease The last part moves at a slow pace, intensifying the effect of man's pitiful struggle against the inexorable desert.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 — Possible
Children, 8 to 12 — No

▼

THE TRAIL OF THE LONESOME PINE » »

Sylvia Sydney, Henry Fonda, Fred MacMurray, Fred Stone, Beulah Bondi, Nigel Bruce, Spanky McFarland, Fuzzy Knight. Novel by John Fox, Jr. Screen play by Grover Jones. Direction by Henry Hathaway. Technicolor photography by Howard Greene, directed by Natalie Kalmus. A Walter Wanger production. Paramount.

Color photography will perhaps be the first attraction of this film, but interestingly enough one is not conscious of color at all in the dramatic high spots. The story itself, directed with telling effectiveness by Mr. Hathaway, is strong enough to put the color medium into the background of consciousness except in the scenic interludes when the shots are so exquisitely lovely that they call for spontaneous appreciation. The mountainous settings are pictured with such remarkable fidelity to atmospheric conditions that one realizes the amazing technical improvement achieved and know that it is only a matter of time when close ups and the make up of actors will reach a greater perfection. This story of inherited feuds, bitter hates, violent tragedies, and final renunciation of the blood vow, has long been popular with many readers. The screen play is a very capable adaption and the large cast is exceedingly satisfactory, praise being due each member.

Beulah Bondi as *Melissa Tolliver,* the peace loving mother always fearful and always praying that her men folk may give up the bloody, useless feud, has perhaps the most sympathetic role and the accidental sacrifice of her lovable little son *Buddie* is a very moving scene. The taste in direction, excellence of the acting, and beauty of photography make this a most interesting film to witness.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Very emotional for many

▼

THE VOICE OF BUGLE ANN » »

Lionel Barrymore, Maureen O'Sullivan, Eric Linden. From the novel by MacKinley Kantor. Direction by Richard Thorpe. M-G-M.

A thoroughly satisfying picture of its type, this dog story will call forth a sympathetic response from almost every audience. Due in part to the technical excellence of the production and the vulnerability of human beings to a display of affection between man and beast, but particularly to Lionel Barrymore's gift for portraying the type of role in which he is cast, this picture makes a sentimental, rather weak plot seem delightfuly sincere and real.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes

Children, 8 to 12 Possible though too emotional

▼

THE WALKING DEAD » »

Boris Karloff, Ricardo Cortez, Edmund Gwenn, Marguerite Churchill, Warren Hull. Direction by Michael Curtiz. Warner Bros.

A melodramatic fantasy replete with gruesome scenes and based on the pseudo-scientific proposition that life may be restored to a dead man. The subject of this experiment has been electrocuted for a crime of which he is innocent, and his life after death is devoted to avenging himself upon those who connived to send him to his undeserved death. The director seems to have lost no opportunity to make the picture blood curdling. It is technically a good job, but granting that there is a public which demands this sort of film, we still wonder why anyone should choose to see it.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Unwholesome

Children, 8 to 12 Certainly not

▼

WOMAN TRAP » »

George Murphey, Akim Tamaroff, Gertrude Michael, Roscoe Karns, Samuel S. Hinds. From a story by Charles Brackett. Screen play by Brian Marlow and Eugene Walter. Direction by Harold Young. Paramount.

There are three items on the debit side to begin with: poor name, a cold-blooded gangster murder and a kidnapping. These are offset to a certain extent by mellow South-of-the-Border atmosphere, a light touch of humor to relieve the intensity, a twist in the plot which is not unravelled till the final moment, the acting of George Murphey as the brisk young reporter and above all the work of Akim Tamiroff, who is suave, enigmatic, shrewd and quite delightful as the Mexican caballero. The plot relates the adventures of a reporter who follows a band of jewel thieves below the Border.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

YELLOW DUST » »

Richard Dix, Leila Hyams, Moroni Olsen, Jessie Ralph. Direction by Wallace Fox. Suggested by the play "Mother Lode" by Dan Totheroh and George O'Neil. R.K.O.

Period costuming, pleasing settings and stirring action are the ingredients of this Western which has a fairly complicated but obvious plot concerning the attempted jumping of a mining claim. It is only mildly entertaining because in spite of violent action, one never doubts the outcome.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes

Children, 8 to 12 Questionable

SHORT SUBJECTS

CARTOONS

BETTY BOOP AND LITTLE KING. Para. The king deserts a gala opera performance, dominated by a huge prima donna, and discovers Betty doing her tricks at a vaudeville rodeo. He enjoys life until the queen comes to bring him back. Good for family, children.

TOONERVILLE TROLLEY. R.K.O. The skipper tries to bring the trolley to meet the train. He is assisted by Katrinka in desperate moments. Good for family and children.

19th HOLE CLUB. Fox Terrytoon. A free golf course is opened in town, whereupon rabbits steal the balls, and there is a drinking bout at the final. This is poor, regardless of audience age.

HOME TOWN OLYMPICS. Fox Terrytoon. Training quarters are opened for the Olympic contestants, and the meet is shown with various athletic events. Crowded and exciting. Fair for family.

COMEDY

ALL AMERICAN TOOTHACHE. M. G. M. The last Thelma Todd comedy. A dental student must pull a wisdom tooth without breaking a piece of it before he is allowed to play football; this concerns the scramble to find the tooth and pry it loose. Fair for family.

THREE ON A LIMB. Fox. Keaton in a boy scout uniform gets romantic over a sandwich stand girl and perpetrates his worst film. Not for family.

BRAIN BUSTERS. Fox. A very far-fetched and boring comedy of two nit-wits involved in an auto sale and resale and general confusion. Poor. Not for family.

MUSICAL

MOSCOW MOODS. Para. The orchestra leader, Yasha Brunchuk, presents Russian songs in typical settings: Volga Boatman, a gypsy song, Dark Eyes, Rare Old Wine and The Barrel. Good. Adults.

PIRATE PARTY ON CATALINA. M. G. M. The technicolor is softer and lovelier than ever, but the stagey effect of the performance is obvious. Chester Morris is the pirate captain, whose ship is moored on the beach by a group of movie people and a ballet. The California Cavaliers perform to gay music. Good, but mature.

SPORT

FINER POINTS. Para. Beautiful pictures of quail hunting in North Carolina, featuring the remarkable bird dogs from the Pinehurst Kennels. Excellent for all.

TRAVEL

MOROCCO. R.K.O. A good descriptive talk accompanies these fine pictures of Morocco, its people and industries. Excellent for all ages.

VARIETY

SCREEN SNAPSHOT No. 2. Columbia. Harriet Parsons presents pictures of Weber's Cactus Garden, followed by various screen celebrities at favorite pursuits, including water badminton. James Gleason's birthday party and Hoot Gibson's rodeo are shown. Good. Adults and family.

THE SEEING EYE. Fox. The training of dogs with utmost skill to make them proficient in guiding blind men is the subject of this interesting and well-photographed study Excellent for all.

SHORTY AT CONEY ISLAND. The chimpanzee, Shorty, goes to Coney Island and seems to enjoy all the stunts. Excellent. All ages.

LET'S DANCE. M.G.M. Pete Smith contributes the explanations to these pictures of the Dave Gould dance studio, showing the adagio and sword dances in normal and in slow motion. Good. Adults.

BETTER HOUSING REEL No. 6. F.H.A. Model homes and explanation of the work done under the Housing Act. Good. Adults.

AUDIOSCOPIKS. M.G.M. The theatre provides spectacles with one green and one red lens so that the audience may get the effect of the third dimension in this film. Objects are brought so close through this illusion that they seem to touch one. Very interesting and amusing for all.

THANKS MR. CUPID. Fox. This is a lamentably poor number. The girls in a beauty parlor rejoice over the man proprietor.

FISHERMAN'S LUCK. Fox. An interesting narrative accompanies these views of deep sea fishing. Good for all ages.

FILMING THE FANTASTIC. Fox. Queer things caught by the camera: a million dollar hotel in Miami now converted into an egg factory; ancient Tunis dwellings like apartment houses; a Greek monastery on a mountain peak; a house fabricated from rolled-up newspapers; Philippino tennis played with the feet; New Zealand albatross; man-made lightning; a boy eight feet four inches tall and a girl of eighteen who measures that number of inches; a Queen Titania castle in Sydney, Australia, etc. Good. All ages.

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THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

APRIL 1936

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Feature Films Reviewed in this Issue

Broadway Playboy
*Captain January
*Charlie Chan at the Circus
*Desert Gold
Don't Get Personal
*Everybody's Old Man
*Farmer in the Dell
"F" Man
Frontier
*Give Us This Night
King of the Damned
*Little Miss Nobody
Love Before Breakfast
A Message to Garcia
*Murder by an Aristocrat
*The Music Goes 'Round
The Passing of the Third Floor Back
*Petticoat Fever
*Rhodes
Robinhood of El Dorado
The Singing Kid
*13 Hours by Air
*Treachery Rides the Range
*Two in Revolt
Wife versus Secretary

*Film suitable for family entertainment but not necessarily appropriate for children under 12 or for children unaccompanied by adults.

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WEBBCRAFT PRINTERS, 2509 WEST WASHINGTON BLVD., LOS ANGELES

MOTION • PICTURE • REVIEWS

Published monthly by

THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB

LOS ANGELES BRANCH

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10c Per Copy - - $1.00 Per Year

Vol. IX APRIL, 1936 No. 4

EDITORIAL

NOTE: The following article by Dr. Thrasher is reprinted from the National Board of Review Magazine with the permission of the editor, Mrs. Bettina Gunczy. We feel that it presents a stimulating viewpoint which will be of special interest to our readers.—EDITORS.

MOTION PICTURES AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

By DR. FREDERIC M. THRASHER

Dr. Thrasher is Associate Professor of Education at New York University. In his work at the University he is conducting, under the joint auspices of the University and the National Board of Review, the first general course in the motion picture covering its artistic, social and educational aspects. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the Board and Secretary of the National Crime Prevention Institute, among other offices.

The potentialities of the motion picture as an instrument of education have never been realized either by educators or by laymen. In no field is this lack of realization more marked than in the social sciences. The well-made motion picture is one of the most effective of all educational devices, not only in imparting information but in stimulating the emotions and changing social attitudes which are the very dynamics of social action. This fact is recognized practically by the oft-expressed fear of propaganda in motion pictures. Soviet Russia is one of the few countries in the world today which is practically attempting a full utilization of the motion picture in the achievement of its social objectives.

In no other place on the globe can the motion picture serve a more useful purpose as an instrument of education than in America where social changes have been too rapid and too pronounced to enable social institutions to keep pace with them.

Any unbiased survey of a typical American community just now reveals widespread social disorganization. An impartial observer of American life before the depression and indeed before 1914 could not have missed the fact that social disorganization was a striking characteristic then as well as now. This problem, therefore antedates both the depression and the War. It is more or less inherent in a social order motivated largely by "rugged individualism." Briefly it grows out of the fact that many important social functions have been performed by institutions lagging far behind the demands made upon them because of swiftly changing economic and social conditions. Another important element in the situation is the fact that most of our social institutions are strongly motivated by institutional ideals and policies which have been formulated independently of the rest of the community. The result has been the development of a social order whose fundamental characteristic is disorder. In spite of some significant exceptions here and there, social disorganization is prevalent and outstanding in the United States and with all its evil consequences of wasted

man-power and resources and of social maladjustment and privation, it is a blasting indictment of a country that advertises so enthusiastically its achievements in the field of education, social work, and community organization.

We are finally beginning to realize that some of our social problems such as crime and juvenile delinquency which have persisted for many years are not due to the entrance into the picture of new forces growing out of war or economic crisis. On the contrary they are merely persistent and costly results of basic community disorganization which has been little affected except to be made somewhat more acute either by war or depression. Now to come to the point, the trouble is exactly this: that delinquency and crime, along with other social problems have lacked a community planning approach which long ago should have pointed a way to their adjustment. This is but one example of many social problems pressing for a solution—many of them so serious that they threaten the very fabric and structure of a democrarcy with the danger that they may even undermine the basic elements in our civilization.

These problems are encountered in every field of the social sciences—economics, political science, and sociology. They include the problems of capital and labor, unemployment relief, slum clearance, living wages and decent working conditions, farm relief, social insurance and security, and many others in which definite economic issues are involved. In addition there is a whole series of problems related to the functioning of democratic governmental institutions: the dangers of Fascism; centralization versus decentralization of governmental functions; and graft and political corruption particularly in local government and municipalities. The field of sociology likewise embraces many problems of grave importance such as divorce, racial relations, immigrant heritages and cultural conflicts, crime, and community disorganization growing out of the social inadequacy and lack of articulation of social institutions.

Effective teaching in the social sciences demands that these problems be presented fully and impartially and that school children be given a thorough knowledge of the issues involved so that these children as adults may be prepared to participate intelligently in the solution of these problems. Adult education in the social sciences is also necessary, if these serious social maladjustments are to be overcome. In both instances there is no more potent instrument of education than the motion picture.

Teaching in the social sciences—civics, economics, and sociology—may be deadly dull. Such teaching may indeed result in the ability of a child to pass a pencil and paper test on institutions as they are theoretically supposed to be, but it takes something more than academic testing to make democracy effective. Social science teaching needs to be rejuvenated and there is no single teaching device which can make it come to life so effectively as the motion picture.

Democracy can be made to live on the screen, to live ideally and practically in a vivid way that will leave indelible impressions upon the plastic mind of youth. Its strength and weaknesses can be brought out by the scientific knowledge and balanced judgment of the social scientist in cooperation with the expert techniques of the scenarist, the scenic artist, the director, the actor, and the cameraman.

It is admitted that two distinct purposes are to be served in motion pictures used as instruments of visual education in the social science field. The first of these is one of imparting knowledge and achieving clarity of explanation. Such a problem would be that of making clear the operation of a governmental unit, or describing the workings of a prison, or presenting graphically the cost of war in economic terms. The animated cartoon has a very important place in this type of educational picture.

It is not enough, however, for the pupil to have a clear grasp of the functioning of social institutions, important as this may be. It is equally important that both children and adults be given, in addition to an understanding of social problems a will to act with reference to these problems and institutions. Not only must they understand democracy but they must believe in democracy, must support its institutions and must participate actively and constructively in democratic processes. It is not enough to have a clear comprehension of the meaning and necessity for the juvenile court, guidance clinic, probation and parole, and community reorganization for crime prevention. There must be, in addition, an active opinion and support of these social devices which will maintain them efficiently. Citizenship, therefore, does not depend upon information alone, but upon the habits of feeling and acting which are deeply rooted in our sentiments and attitudes.

It is here that the motion picture has a prime function to perform, because it has demonstrated that it can create sentiments, that it can change attitudes. Motion pictures can make

us hate the Negro or can create in us attitudes of tolerance and cooperation. They can make us love our parents and show consideration for them. They can make us hate war or love it. They can make us friendly and tolerant of diverse nationalities and economic and social strata in the population, or they can create in us disdain, fear, and distrust. They can make us appreciate the contribution of science to human progress and generate attitudes of respect for and support of scientific research. A good example of this very thing is *The Story of Louis Pasteur,* one of the greatest pictures ever made in Hollywood and I predict that it will be rated as the best picture of 1936. The significance of this picture is not that it presents the accurate techniques of science, but that it is deeply touching, that it moves its audience to tears for social values that are truly significant and not the maudlin sentimentality of the "tear-jerker." This is the educational talking film par excellence. There is one other great educational film that stands in the same class, but whose fundamental purpose is clarity of explanation presented with dramatic cogency; that is *The Human Adventure,* the great story of Dr. Breasted's reconstruction of the human past in Egypt, Assyria, and the other countries of the near East. *The Story of Louis Pasteur* and *The Human Adventure* are the two greatest educational films which have ever been produced and each stands as a type with its own standards of excellence.

It is obvious, therefore, that the motion picture is a powerful instrument and that it may be used by the unscrupulous selfseeker as well as by the social scientist whose only desire is to develop substantial citizenship and ultimately to solve social problems.

The use of the motion picture as an instrument of education in the social science fields raises the question as to whether there is a difference between propaganda in the movies and education for social efficiency. The answer to this question depends entirely upon one's point of view. What would be considered wholesome education by some persons undoubtedly would be thought of as dangerous propaganda by others. Perhaps there is no line of demarcation between propaganda and education, but if we wish to make a distinction may it not be that propaganda is that type of education through which selfish interests attempt to put across some particular idea or program without the public being fully aware of its implications. Legitimate education in the social science field means thorough and impartial understanding of social issues grounded in clear comprehension of social structures and social processes. There are undoubtedly difficulties in the way of effective social science teaching whether the motion picture is used or not, particularly in the handling of controversial issues. Some of these difficulties are well illustrated in the problems which *The March of Time* has had to face in handling questions which are debatable and in which strongly biased attitudes may be involved. There may be some criticism as to the way in which these problems have been met; yet on the whole it cannot be doubted but that the *March of Time* has achieved an admirable handling of current events and one which has great value in social science teaching.

Progress in the development of films for social science teaching has been very slow. Yet some things have been done more or less fortuitously both in shorts and feature length films which, if properly used by skillful teachers, have real educational value in this field. Such films as *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang,* the MGM crime shorts, *The Road to Life, The Mayor of Hell, Wild Boys of the Road, Are These Our Children?* and a number of others have real significance in the field of criminology. The American social hygiene film, *Damaged Lives,* represents a good beginning in the public health field. The animated peace film *Why?,* the documentary film, *The First World War, All Quiet on the Western Front, Hell on Earth,* and others may be used effectively in discussing the problems of war and peace. And there are many others that have social implications worthy of discussion.

But these films only give us the faintest notion of the tremendous new field in the social sciences which can be opened up both within and without the school. The important social science scenarios are yet to be written. The important social science films are yet to be made. Those which are successful and effective either in single features or in separate films will present the clear exposition of the principles of social science and will stimulate the development of emotional drives and social attitudes which will create good citizenship, reinforce our democratic social fabric, and promote social progress.

FEATURE FILMS

BROADWAY PLAYBOY » »

Warren William, June Travis, Gene Lockhart, Kathleen Lockhart. From the play "Home Towners" by George M. Cohan. Direction by William McGann. First National.

Excellent photography, perfectly appointed settings and fine wardrobes do not quite make up for the scarcity of plot material, the film being a series of incidents related to the engagement of a New York plutocrat and a young lady who is suspected of ulterior motives. Her motives remain obscure to the very end. The only outstanding part is taken by Gene Lockhart as Bancroft, the belligerent friend from Indiana. To the accompaniment of endless trays of cocktails the principals quarrel, are reconciled and quarrel, and no one cares very much how the altercation ends.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No — **Children, 8 to 12** No

CAPTAIN JANUARY » »

Shirley Temple, Guy Kibbee, Slim Summerville, June Lang, Buddy Ebsen, Sara Haden. Based on a story by Laura E. Richards. Direction by David Butler. Twentieth Century-Fox.

Shirley Temple is never more adorable than when she is graciously sharing honors with others of the cast, and in this picture she is unusually piquant as a contrast to the rough and ready associates with whom she laughs and dances and sheds a few April tears. There are three main characters, two old sea-dogs and the winsome little orphan washed ashore after a shipwreck to become their charge, to be loved and defended against all comers. While at first it is difficult to disassociate Guy Kibbee from his former roles, he is excellent as Captain January. Slim Summerville contributes a fine characterization as the other sea Captain. It is a human interest tale with many amusing anecdotes, to be enjoyed by all ages.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent — **Children, 8 to 12** Excellent

CHARLIE CHAN AT THE CIRCUS » »

Warner Oland, Keye Luke, Francis Ford, Wade Boteler, Paul Stanton, J. Carrol Naish. Based on the character by Earl Derr Biggers. Direction by Harry Lachman. Twentieth Century-Fox.

Charlie Chan, played by Warner Oland as usual, arrives at the circus with passes for his children, fourteen amusing little stair-steps. A man is murdered, and the show is on, a three-ringed circus combined with a three-ringed mystery. Perhaps there are a few irrelevant situations and a few loose ends; it may not be as good as the best Chan films, but it is entertaining for all who like the Chinese detective-philosopher who has time for profound observations on life while his nimble mind follows the devious by-ways of crime. Particularly good is his teamwork with his oldest son, impersonated by Keye Luke.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good — **Children, 8 to 12** Too tense

DESERT GOLD » »

Larry "Buster" Crabbe, Robert Cummings, Marsha Hunt, Tom Keene, Monte Blue, Raymond Hatton. From a novel by Zane Grey. Screen play by Stuart Anthony and Robert Yost. Direction by James Hogan. Para.

Western action films follow so much the same pattern that the plot might easily be given for all; hidden or stolen mine, hard riding cowboys or western gangsters, hero ever to the rescue of a lovely girl. Interest varies according to production values. This one in a double bill will hold its place because of a direct simplicity of plot, suitability in casting, and stirring scenes of excellent horsemanship. Raymond Hatton as "Doc Belding" is cleverly individual in a character role, Tom Keene is a likable hero and Marsha Hunt somewhat suggests Lillian Gish by her appearance. It is exciting but not too murderous for enjoyment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Probably enjoyable — **Children, 8 to 12** Exciting

DON'T GET PERSONAL » »

Sally Eilers, James Dunn. Pinky Tomlin. Direction by William Nigh. Universal.

The combination of James Dunn and Sally Eilers has charmed many people in the past, but it is powerless to raise this tiresome story to the level of acceptable entertainment. It is a light farce composed of unlikely situations, commencing with a scene in Central Park in which two young men auction themselves and their "flivver" and are purchased by a girl who, apparently possessing but five dollars, is in truth vulgarly rich. Some bits are ludicrous, but in the main the humor is forced and crude; good photography and settings are wasted on a poor theme.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Waste of time — **Children, 8 to 12** No

EVERYBODY'S OLD MAN » »

Irvin S. Cobb, Rochelle Hudson, Johnny Downs, Norman Foster, Alan Dinehart. Suggested by the story by Edgar Franklin. Direction by James Flood. Twentieth Century-Fox.

Irvin Cobb in the title role is a kindly, lovable, old-fashioned character. Resenting the implication that he is losing his grip as president of a large canning company, he retires only to enter business under another name and to outstrip his over-ambitious nephew. The plot is not unusual but has a certain freshness because of the sincerity of the actors and the skilful direction of humorous situations as well as of more serious scenes.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Little interest

FARMER IN THE DELL » »

Fred Stone, Jean Parker, Esther Dale, Moroni Olsen, Frank Albertson. From the novel by Phil Stong. Screen play by Sam Mintz and John Grey. Direction by Ben Holmes. R.K.O.-Radio.

When an Iowa farmer retires and takes his wife and daughter to live in a Hollywood bungalow, strange and upsetting changes occur in his family. Fred Stone is well cast as the unassuming farmer who ultimately refuses to allow sudden prosperity and his wife's ambitions to spoil the happiness of their daughter and her childhood sweetheart. For audiences who like to look behind the scenes of a movie studio, there are some entertaining glimpses, and for those who think they know all about Hollywood there are amusing bits of satire upon the crudities of hangers-on in the fringe of the film social world. The picture is pleasant, light entertainment built around a few clever ideas.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Probably no interest

F MAN » »

Jack Haley, Grace Bradley, William Frawley, Adrienne Marden. From a story by Richard Connell. Direction by Edward F. Cline. Paramount.

A country boy comes to the city obsessed with the idea of achieving fame as a G-Man but proves such a nuisance at the headquarters of law enforcement officers that he is dubbed an F Man. There is a humorous twist to the plot at the end when he becomes worthy of advancement. The film wavers above and below the entertainment line; sometimes it is amusing, sometimes very stupid. Acting is fair. The story is clean, based on the precept that crime does not pay.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fair

Children, 8 to 12 No value

FRONTIER » »

Direction by Alexander Dovjenko. Photography by Edouard Tisse. Amkino.

This picture shows the conflict between Russian peasants of Eastern Siberia, who cling to their old religion and old customs, and the Soviets who are endeavoring to colonize and develop the country. The plot is so confused that it is difficult even to ascertain to which party the characters belong, and is further complicated by the admixture of Mongolians and Japanese. The Japanese appear to be intriguing to encourage the peasants in their attempts to maintain their independence and to block the Soviet plan for building a new city of Aerograd on the shores of the Pacific. The casting is most interesting with Russian and Mongolian types, a Mongolian forester singing as he runs along on skis, a venerable priest and many others. The photography is, in the main, excellent and the views of the great Taiga forest and the ocean are surpassingly beautiful. There is a mixture of simple and homely peasant life and fighting, with two cold-blooded murders (or executions) vividly shown. The picture ends with views of the great concentration of airplanes which took place in Russia some time ago, with hundreds of planes and thousands of parachute jumpers, intended to show the might of the Soviets. Due to the confused nature of the plot, the inevitable propaganda is not as pointed as usual. As a spectacle the picture is interesting for adults.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No

Children, 8 to 12 No

GIVE US THIS NIGHT » »

Jan Kiepura, Gladys Swarthout, Philip Merivale, Benny Baker, Alan Mabray. Based on a story by Jacques Bachrach. Music by Erich Wolfgang Korngold. Direction by Alexander Hall. Paramount.

A singing fisherman of Sorrento hurls eggs at the countenance of an aging tenor, is pursued by the carabinieri and subsequently meets the opera singer, *Maria,* who opens the magic gateway to fame and love. The plot, refurbished but still familiar, lacks conviction because Jan Kiepura, and to a lesser degree Miss Swarthout, are permitted to behave as they would on the operatic stage with complete disregard of dramatic values. Both have been better in previous produc-

tions. It is a film primarily for music lovers who will enjoy the lovely aria from *Romeo and Juliet* and other operatic numbers.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes, if interested in music

Children, 8 to 12 Wholesome but probably dull

▼

KING OF THE DAMNED » »

Conrad Veidt, Helen Vinson, Noah Beery, Cecil Ramage. From the play by John Chancellor. Direction by Walter Forde. Gaumont-British.

Possibly there are individuals who are not convinced that brutal exploitation of prisoners should be abolished and who can be reached only by grim picturization. Certainly we have had the theme reiterated ad nauseum in American films. This production is in the mood of heavy melancholy of earlier Continental pictures, and it is very well done in its way. There is the weight of oppression, made more intense by the heat of the fever-tainted jungle and the deluge of the tropical storm. Conrad Veidt is outstanding as the leader of the revolt on the prison island of Santa Maria. Swift action in the fighting scenes and a slight thread of romance lend distraction from the pervading gloom, but for the sensitive it remains a film to be endured, not enjoyed.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Harrowing

Children, 8 to 12 By no means

▼

LITTLE MISS NOBODY » »

Jane Withers, Jane Darwell, Ralph Morgan, Sara Haden, Harry Carey, Betty Jean Hainey. Based on the story "The Matron's Report" by Frederick H. Brennan. Direction by John Blystone. Twentieth Century-Fox.

It is the heart's desire of two little girls in the Sunshine Orphanage to be adopted into a wealthy family. One is *Judy,* played by Jane Withers, brimful of energy and mischief, the other pretty, delicate Mary, otherwise Betty Jean Hainey. How they obtain their wish is told in a lively manner with a sympathetic note for the troubles of childhood. One wonders at the paucity of imagination which is responsible for a gangster element in a story of two appealing children. Otherwise it is a delightful film.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes

Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

LOVE BEFORE BREAKFAST » »

Carole Lombard, Preston Foster, Cesar Romero, Janet Beecher, Richard Carle. Direction by Walter Lang. From a novel by Faith Baldwin. Universal.

This New York society version of "The Taming of the Shrew" is a tempestuous, noisy farce, furnishing much hilarity. The millionaire hero, complete with palatial office, private bar and steam yacht, buys an oil company in order to send his rival to Japan, but the stratagem avails him little. He and Miss Lombard battle through seven reels to determine who will have the upper hand in the future and both display great ingenuity in their plots to accomplish the other's downfall. Miss Lombard receives some rough treatment, including an inadvertent black eye, but comes up smiling at the end. The story is complete foolishness but many of the lines and situations are amusing. The direction is fast if a little incoherent, and the casting and acting are excellent. The title is hardly appropriate, as there are no breakfasts shown in the picture and but little love.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too sophisticated

Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

A MESSAGE TO GARCIA » »

Wallace Beery, Barbara Stanwyck, John Boles, Alan Hale, Mona Barrie, Enrique Acosta. Suggested by Elbert Hubbard's Essay and the book by Lt. Andrew S. Rowan. Screen play by W. P. Lipscomb and Gene Fowler. Direction by George Marshall. Twentieth Century-Fox.

An historic journey is shown in this film in an exciting and seemingly authentic series of melodramatic incidents. During the Spanish American War, President McKinley entrusted an important letter to a certain Lieutenant Rowan with instructions to locate General Garcia somewhere in Cuba and deliver the letter to him. The film shows Rowan's persistence and bravery in spite of terrific hazards and the final success of his mission. Probably its historic interest is its best drawing card. Most of the acting is only ordinary though Wallace Beery does an excellent characterization of a soldier of fortune. Some of the scenes of torture are uncomfortably prolonged and the whole thing is rather confused.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Passable

Children, 8 to 12 Too exciting

▼

MURDER BY AN ARISTOCRAT » »

Lyle Talbot, Marguerite Churchill, Claire Dodd, Virginia Brissac, William Davidson, John Eldredge. Story by Mignon G. Eberhart. Direction by Frank McDonald. First National.

There is a good deal of satisfaction when the reprehensible waster, *Bayard,* comes to his end so that the honorable name of the *Thatcher* family may be preserved. Interest never lags in the brisk pursuit of the unknown criminal, and suspicion hovers about each member of the widely-assorted cast. If

one is inclined to be critical, Miss Keating has too great a knowledge of detective methods and too little regard for professional ethics for a nurse, but in a mystery play the solution of the crime is the all-important point. While not outstanding, this is a fairly good example of its type.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Passable **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

THE MUSIC GOES 'ROUND » »

Harry Richmond, Lionel Stauder, Rochelle Hudson, Walter Connolly. Direction by Victor Schertzinger. Columbia.

This is a gay, wholesome film with catchy music, good ballet and negro dancing, and comedy. A troupe of old type players are acting in a show on a Mississippi River boat when they are discovered by a New York revue star on vacation. He transplants them to Broadway where they present their acts in all seriousness only to be greeted with laughter from the sophisticated audience. The romance between the New York actor and the showman's daughter is the core of the plot.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining **Children, 8 to 12** Yes

▼

THE PASSING OF THE THIRD FLOOR BACK

Conrad Veidt, Anna Lee, Rene Ray, Frank Ollier. Direction by Berthold Viertel. Gaumont-British.

Possibly allegory is more difficult to make convincing in the movies than on the stage. At any rate, this picture version of an old stage favorite is distinctly unsuccessful though there still remain some interesting features. Into a boarding house, where greed, selfishness and vice characterize most of the inmates, comes a stranger who typifies the spirit of Christ. By his own gentle kindliness he brings about a transformation in all of these benighted human beings. In his effort to give an impression of otherworldiness, Conrad Veidt, as the stranger, is ascetic rather than spiritual, and too coldly aloof. Most of the other parts seem exaggerated, though the little scullery maid is excellent. The tempo is excessively slow. Aside from the fact that an uplifting thought is presented the film has little value.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too mature **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

PETTICOAT FEVER » »

Robert Montgomery, Myrna Loy, Reginald Owen, Winifred Shotter, Otto Yamaoka. Direction by George Fitzmaurice. M-G-M.

A young radio operator, stationed at a lonely outpost in Labrador with no companion save his Eskimo servant, for two years has scarcely heard from his fiancée in New York. He is suddenly forced into the position of playing host to a titled English flyer and his prospective bride, whose plane had met with an accident. They are on their way to be married in Montreal, but are compelled to remain with the radio man while repairs are made in the plane. A series of absurd but sprightly scenes follow, the situation being complicated by the sudden arrival of the New York fiancée. There is little attempt at characterization, and the ending is abrupt and not entirely convincing, but much may be forgiven a story when its gaiety is so consistently maintained and its interpreters so obviously enjoy their roles.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining **Children, 8 to 12** Probably no interest

▼

ROBIN HOOD OF EL DORADO » »

Warner Baxter, Ann Loring, Bruce Cabot, Margo. Direction by William A. Wellman. M-G-M.

"Robin Hood of El Dorado" tells the story of those exciting, glamorous days of early California when Joaquin Murrieta and his outlaws raided and terrorized an entire state. Warner Baxter gives a vivid, moving portrayal of the young Mexican who became a killer solely to avenge his wife and brother. So beautifully is his character developed that throughout one feels Murrieta's tragic regret that his course is against the law. The romantic and colorful episodes of California history are well selected, the scenery is beautiful and a certain quality of tragic destiny makes this an impressive picture.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Mature **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

RHODES » »

Walter Huston, Oscar Homolka, Basil Sydney, Frank Cellier, Peggy Ashcroft, Ndanisa Kumalo. Based on book "Rhodes" by Sarah Gertrude Millin. Adaptation by Leslie Arliss and Michael Barringer. Directed by Berthold Viertel. Gaumont-British.

The career of Cecil Rhodes was spectacular and dramatic, crowded, as it was, with action and events. His character was one which was difficult to evaluate during his lifetime. Many thought him only personally ambitious and greedy, others saw him as a great humanitarian. He lived for his ideal—the domination of the world by the British people and his physical frailty made his achievements the more astounding. The picture "Rhodes" gives us some impression of this masterful will and his seemingly contradictory characteristics. That it

fails to be dynamically dramatic may be due to the fact that it is difficult to give in so short a space a sufficient understanding of Rhodes' amazing personality or to build up to the several dramatic heights necessary to fairly picture his life. It is however a most interesting biographical study and Walter Huston suggests a physical and spiritual resemblance to pictures of the great man. The story takes us from the time when Rhodes consolidated the diamond industry, to his early death. He took over Barney Banato's interests and yet kept his friendship and included him in his own gigantic plan of settlement and development. The character of Banato (Frank Cellier) is very satisfactory. Basil Sydney gives a fine portrayal of Dr. Jameson. The man's adventurous spirit, forceful magnetism and amused tolerance is realized by the portrait and one understands the impetuous daring which caused him to precipitate the raid which almost ruined the leader to whom he was devoted. But the strongest characters are those of Oom Paul Kruger played by Oscar Homolka and King Lobengula by the native Ndanisa Kumalo of Matebeleland. Homolka is magnificent. His Kruger is simple, dignified, stubborn, crafty. He *is* the great patriarch fanatically ambitious for his kingdom yet capable of unexpected kindnesses. His great physical strength, his keen penetrating eyes under shaggy brows, his ragged beard make an unforgettable picture. The native king is equally perfect. Peggy Ashcroft plays a negative role, probably referring to the part Olive Schreiner and her books played in the life of Cecil Rhodes. The South African exteriors are very fine and the mid-Victorian settings and Kruger's Dutch home are exceptionally interesting. The picture presents undistorted facts and is a stimulating contribution to historical drama, well worth seeing.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fine — **Children, 8 to 12** Mature

▼

THE SINGING KID » »

Al Jolson, Sybil Jason, Edward Everett Horton, Lyle Talbot, Allen Jenkins, Beverly Roberts, Claire Dodd. Story by Robert Lord. Direction by William Keighley. First National.

In a loose-jointed, noisy production, Al Jolson revives his old successes and offers new songs which are below past standards. The most spectacular as to setting, "Save Me, Sister," is dull and in doubtful taste, while the most amusing ditty in the show, "My How This Country Has Changed," is sung not by Jolson but by the Yacht Club Boys. Many of the jokes are so hoary that they could be eliminated without regret. The story concerns a popular singer who is deceived and exploited by his fiancée and his attorney. He loses his voice and departs to the country where he finds new interests in a young writer and a delightful child who is by far the most attractive member of the cast. Al Jolson's personality will compensate his admirers for weak points in the film. Others should skip it.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Harmless if it entertains — **Children, 8 to 12** Tiresome

▼

13 HOURS BY AIR » »

Fred MacMurray, Joan Bennett, Zasu Pitts, Alan Baxter, Fred Keating, Brian Donlevy, John Howard. From a story by Bogart Rogers and Frank Mitchell Dazey. Screen play by Bogart Rogers. Direction by Mitchell Leisen. Paramount.

A plane load of passengers, all with reasons either for hoping desperately to arrive on time or for plotting villainously to delay the plane, are the characters in this comedy-mystery melodrama. There is nothing particularly original in the main idea of the plot, but up-to-date wisecracking, on the part of the pilot and a blonde passenger, a very real forced landing in a snowstorm, a peculiarly obnoxious small boy and his absurd governess, and a lot of excitement keep one attentive and entertained throughout.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good — **Children, 8 to 12** Probably too exciting

▼

TWO IN REVOLT » »

John Arledge, Louise Latimer, Moroni Olsen, "Lightning" the dog, "Warrior" the horse. Screen play by Earl Johnson and Thomas Starey. Direction by Glenn Tryon. R.K.O.

Here is a picture that all animal lovers should see. It has a high quality of entertainment value because of its exciting plot and its two superbly gifted animal actors, a dog and a horse. The script writers are to be commended for the real artistry with which the human beings in the story are kept in the background and their parts made subservient to the far more vivid interest of the two animal friends. The story has not been marred, as so many similar ones have been, by the intrusion of an irrelevant and irritating human romance. Interest centers about a pedigreed young race horse and his pal, a police dog. We witness the education of the young racer by his devoted trainer and the daughter of the owner; the friendship that develops with the dog and many amusing scenes of their gambols together. Then there is tense drama involving

the "call of the wild" in which the horse escapes to join a herd of his wild companions on the range, the saving of his life by the dog, and finally the thrilling climax of the race, in which the dog plays a leading part in helping his friends to win. The remarkable histrionic genius of the two chief actors and their exciting but plausible adventures will hold the interest of all who cherish a sympathy and kinship with horses and dogs.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent **Children, 8 to 12** Excellent

▼

TREACHERY RIDES THE RANGE » »

Dick Foran, Monte Blue, Craig Reynolds, Jim Thorpe, Paula Stone. Direction by Frank McDonald. Warner Bros.

This is more valuable than the usual Western because of the good use of historical background. It shows the time when the Indians of the prairies were facing famine because of the decimation of the herds of buffaloes by the whites, and when in spite of a treaty, depredations by outlaws resulted in a savage outbreak. There is a sympathetic understanding of the problems of the Indians and of those pioneers who strove to be just. Technically it is much like other Westerns; there are good scenic effects, plenty of action, an acceptable cast.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good **Children, 8 to 12** Very exciting

▼

WIFE vs. SECRETARY » »

Clark Gable, Jean Harlow, Myrna Loy, May Robson, George Barbier, James Stewart, Hobart Cavanaugh. Screen play by Norman Krasna, Alice Duer Miller, John Lee Mahin. From a story by Faith Baldwin. Direction by Clarence Brown. M-G-M.

The three leading players are to be complimented for making good entertainment of a trite story. The plot is the old familiar triangle; husband, wife and secretary. Jean Harlow, as the secretary, falls in love with her employer but will not admit the fact even to herself until the end when, with laudable abnegation, she brings about a reconciliation between husband and wife. In the meantime the wife has been subjected to every test within the story writer's power to shake her faith in her husband's fidelity, and the supposedly clever New York business man, through single track enthusiasm for his business and boyish disregard of conventions, has placed himself in innumerable compromising situations. However, for most audiences the good cast, in their luxurious surroundings, will more than compensate for an incredible story.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

SHORT SUBJECTS

VARIETY

PATHE HEADLINERS OF TWENTY-FIVE YEARS. This is a very interesting set of pictures from old Pathe newsreels, showing the seven presidents of the period, then year by year the notable events and progress of the world. Family.

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THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

MAY 1936

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Feature Films Reviewed in this Issue

Absolute Quiet
And So They Were Married
Big Brown Eyes
The Big Noise
The Case Against Mrs. Ames
*The Country Beyond
The Ex-Mrs. Bradford
The First Baby
*The Great Ziegfeld
Hard Luck Dame
*The Harvester
Hell at the Circus
Human Cargo
I Married a Doctor
The Law in Her Hands
Let's Sing Again
*The Moon's Our Home
Moonlight Murder
*Mr. Deeds Goes To Town
*Murder on a Bridle Path
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*One Rainy Afternoon
The Penitente Murder Case
*Showboat
*The Sky Parade
Small Town Girl
*Sons O' Guns
Special Investigator
Sutter's Gold
*Things To Come
Till We Meet Again
Times Square Playboy
Too Many Parents
Under Two Flags
The Unguarded Hour
The Witness Chair

*Film suitable for family entertainment but not necessarily appropriate for children under 12 or for children unaccompanied by adults.

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WEBBCRAFT PRINTERS, 2809 WEST WASHINGTON BLVD., LOS ANGELES

MOTION • PICTURE • REVIEWS

Published monthly by

THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB

LOS ANGELES BRANCH

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

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Address all communications to THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB, 943 South Hoover St., Los Angeles, Calif.

10c Per Copy - - $1.00 Per Year

Vol. IX MAY, 1936 No. 5

MOTION PICTURES AND THEIR PUBLIC

From a Series of Study Programs by Mrs. Thomas G. Winter

In the motion picture world there has grown up a unique situation, namely, an intimate relation between the Business-Art on the one side and the Public on the other. After all, it is a natural growth. The makers and exhibitors of pictures, like all business men, depend upon the popularity of their product for their success. But that popularity, unlike success in most business, is intertwined with emotional elements. Here (as hinted in Number III of this series) is where the problem of art comes in. Here the mechanics of picture making finds itself touched by questions of good and bad taste, of social value, of truth, of beauty, of that wide range of emotional reactions that we call entertainment. One might expect that the same problem would exist with regard to the stage, books, and other arts. But there is this tremendous difference. The picture goes to millions upon millions while the other mediums of expression touch only limited classes. So millions upon millions are interested, excited, take the motion picture to their hearts and consider it their own affair. It is "human nature's daily food." The motion picture has been called "both a romance and a business." Intense personal interest plus the wide spread of the picture audience plus the realization that pictures contribute toward standards of fashion, of character, and even of morals; these create the problem of the Motion Picture and the Public. The picture men ask themselves not only "What does the public want?" but they must also ask "What does the public enjoy and love?" It is not a bald question, but a colorful one. The answer must come from the feelings of the enormous audiences rather than from their brains, and this makes it a complicated matter, a matter not merely of cold logic, but of those delicate emotions that are as complicated as the notes you can draw from a violin.

Out of this situation there comes the effort of the public to influence or control the quality of pictures. These efforts take two forms: first, legal control, which would tie up both production standards and business methods and subject pictures to political dominion; second, considering pictures the joint interest of both producer and audience, each reacting on the other—the audience that appreciates and demands a fine quality of pictures being constantly increased, while the better elements inside the studios are thus stimulated and supported into making a finer product.

Six states (Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kansas, New York, Maryland and Virginia) have state censorship. Florida has modified censorship regulations. Massachusetts has a law forbidding Sunday shows unless a license is obtained from the mayor or selectman of the various cities, and prohibits the issuing of licenses unless the film is approved by the Commissioner of Public Safety. In 1923 a state censorship proposal was submitted to popular vote in Massachusetts and voted down two to one. This is the only time the matter has come up for popular vote. A good many cities have local censorship, of which perhaps the strictest is Chicago where it is unlawful to exhibit films showing immorality, depravity, criminality, gun play, obscenity. Since 1922 there has been no addition to the list of states that impose censorship.

One bill introduced to establish Federal control of motion pictures—the Hudson Bill—might be cited as an example of ill-advised legislation. This bill, now dead, provided for a group of commissioners, some of them women. This commission would be of a most extraordinary character, for its positions would be held for life, with removal possible only through malfeasance. Moreover, it would be absolutely above Congressional control, as the funds would come, not as all other public funds come—by Congressional appropriation—but by a tax levied upon the motion picture industry. It would also have the power to set up its local machinery all over the country. It is hard to think of a more astonishing and un-American plan than to establish a permanent, arbitrary, enormous bureau of this kind, and make it quite independent of government control.

Of course nearly all communities have general police power that as a rule provides against the showing of two types of pictures: Those that are considered obscene; and those that are libelous or that are likely to involve suits for libel. Such legal powers, it should be noted, provide punishment *after* showing, whereas, of course, censorship requires this form of expression to be reviewed by political authority before publication.

Of course censorship has definite limitations to its effectiveness. It can only cut out. It can not create. It can not give us charm, drama, beauty, delight; yet these are the very things that swing the millions to the motion picture theatre. At its best (and it is generally honest) it is only a magnified scissors, and, as the report of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ said, "The motion pictures can not be made good by the use of scissors." At its worst, censorship is tangled with politics and personalities.

It is to be noted, also, that there is lack of uniformity in censorship standards of various communities. This is because there is no yard stick for either morals or good taste.

Censorship has had little effect on the quality of pictures. It has certainly prevented certain communities from seeing certain objectionable scenes, but this hardly seems a great curative.

We need to go a great deal further than the scissors business. Our experience in this country has certainly taught us that political agencies do not prove themselves great moral forces. Never in history have laws succeeded in creating higher spiritual impulses. It takes moral agencies, not mechanical methods, to bring about moral results. Laws can cut out. When censorship is intelligent and honorable it can lop off evils, but censorship cannot meet the public demand for good pictures. Moreover, lifting the standards of pictures is not a matter of fighting with a hostile industry. Manifestly, the makers of pictures must try to please the public. People do not go to movies from a sense of duty, but only because they are lured by the expectation of finding something to enjoy. Unless they are so drawn, they stay away.

As practical comment on the situation it is very important to note that censorship has not expanded its territory during recent years. Yet pictures have improved.

That there has been a phenomenal upswing in the quality of pictures in recent years is not a matter of individual opinion, but is testified by a flood of editorials, organization resolutions, significant letters.

The Better Picture, in this sense, means not only the clean picture, but the picture with (1) higher entertainment value, (2) finer dramatic sense, and (3) vastly improved technical quality. Remember, none of these qualities can be imposed upon pictures from the outside. They can be developed only from within the studios. Their impulse is created by public demand; their accomplishment is stabilized by public response and appreciation. Picture makers and picture audiences reacting on each other have accomplished notable results.

FEATURE FILMS

ABSOLUTE QUIET » »

Lionel Atwell, Irene Hervey, Raymond Walburn Stuart Erwin. From the story by George F. Worts. Screen play by Harry Clork. Direction George B. Seitz. M.G.M.

"Excitement at any price" could well be the title of this mixture of farce, melodrama and tragedy. The "price" is a complete abandonment of coherent plot and plausibility of character. In lieu of these the story provides a succession of exciting scenes accompanied by the inevitable patter of the underworld. When it finally gets under way, the picture resolves itself into a series of incidents centering around an overworked theatrical producer who, in company with the usual feminine secretary, is ordered to rest in "absolute quiet" on his remote ranch, a man and a woman gangster fleeing from the law who break in upon the rest cure and a party of survivors from an airplane accident who make a forced landing near the ranch. All, including the governor of the state who was in the airplane, are at the mercy of the gangster pair, and there are the typical terrorizing scenes which always accompany such situations. In the end the two gangsters are shot and stage a melodramatic death scene completely out of key with the farcical tone of the story. One would object to the cheap characterization of the Governor, who is both a fool and a villain, were the picture of sufficient importance to possess any deleterious influence.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No — **Children, 8 to 12** Unsuitable

AND SO THEY WERE MARRIED » »

Mary Astor, Melvyn Douglas, Edith Fellows, Jack Moran. Direction by Elliott Nugent. Columbia.

That the lives of parents are not theirs to direct nor dispose is aptly illustrated by this highly entertaining comedy. A charming but somewhat bitter divorcée with her little daughter and a pleasantly attractive widower with his young son, find themselves temporarily marooned at a winter resort with few other guests. Their instinctive antagonism to each other is gradually overcome by propinquity but their growing interest in each other is eyed with alarm and actively resisted by both children. The methods of attack are hilariously funny as well as their own reactions to each other, and the dénouement, a situation with which they had not reckoned, absurdly amusing. The children are excellent and their behavior is entirely normal. The distracted parents are humanly charming under their emotional stress. Adults should thoroughly enjoy the complications and the underlying thought. It is all very well done.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Mature — **Children, 8 to 12** Hardly

BIG BROWN EYES » »

Cary Grant, Joan Bennett, Walter Pidgeon, Marjorie Gateson. Original story by James Edward Grant. Direction by Raoul Walsh. A Walter Wanger Production.

This is second rate entertainment, a complicated jumble of criminal events which bewilder rather than intrigue the audience. *Eve Fallon,* a wise-cracking blonde manicurist in a large New York hotel, makes the acquaintance of various people, and her close observation assists *Danny Barr,* a police detective, in the identification of a gang of jewel thieves. The lines of Joan Bennett and Cary Grant in the principal roles are artificial and devoid of real humor; the plot is based on chance instead of logical, cumulative evidence.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Poor — **Children, 8 to 12** No

THE BIG NOISE » »

Guy Kibbee, Warren Hull, Alma Lloyd. Direction by Frank McDonald. Warner Bros.

A hastily thrown together story which has little, except the name of the leading male actor, to recommend it. The incidents center around the trite situation of the elderly millionaire, who is forced by younger business associates to retire and who comes to Southern California to live in unhappy idleness. Acting on the advice of one of the elderly employees of the fashionable hotel, he secretly goes into partnership with an enterprising youth in the dry cleaning business, finds himself faced with a gang of racketeers who demand exhorbitant "dues" for allowing him to continue in business, and in the end succeeds in exposing the racket to the police and marrying his young daughter to his partner. The story, bare of any touch of characterization which might have humanized the stereotyped incidents, will afford little entertainment to any type of audience. The shooting affray used as a climax, in which the cleaning establishment is strewn with dying racketeers is too unreal and mechanically directed to shock the sensibilities of the modern spectator of any age. The best that can be said of the picture is that

it affords harmless diversion for the uncritical and opportunity to slumber for the weary.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Worthless — **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

THE CASE AGAINST MRS. AMES » »

Madeline Carroll, George Brent, Arthur Treacher, Alan Mobray, Beulah Bondi, Scotty Becket, Richard Carle, Guy Bates Post. From an original story by Arthur Somers Roche, adapted by Gene Towne and Graham Baker. Direction by William A. Sieter. Warner Bros.

While the story of this murder trial and legal fight for the custody of a child is distinctly distasteful subject matter, it is acted and directed well enough to hold undivided attention throughout. The story concerns a woman who is tried for a murder, the circumstances of which place her in a seriously suspicious situation. Her son's affections are alienated and even vindication leaves a most unpleasant aftermath to contemplate. One wonders whether such a problem is worth the emotional reaction one gets by its unfoldment. It is undoubtedly well done. Madeline Carroll is a dramatic actress of ability, exquisitely gowned but too hard and sure of herself to get the sympathy at all times which the role should call for. George Brent is excellent also although he is made to drink too much. Beulah Bondi is thoroughly despicable as the bitterly vindictive mother-in-law. The child is amazingly fine. Audience taste alone can dictate the success of such a picture.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 By no means — **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

THE COUNTRY BEYOND » »

Rochelle Hudson, Paul Kelly. From the novel by James Oliver Curwood. Screen play by Lamar Trotti. Direction by Eugene Ford. Twentieth Century-Fox.

It is a pity this picture, with its excellent opening scenes and its superb photography, should not have had a stronger plot to develop. In the initial sequences we are led to believe that the story will concern the training of the always interesting Canadian Mounted Police and reveal their skill in tracking down and convicting fur smugglers. But as soon as the action gets under way it becomes merely the romance of the apprentice policeman and the lodgekeeper's daughter. The running to cover of the band of fur smugglers which promised high suspense in the beginning is more or less submerged beneath the love-making of two very plainly trademarked Hollywood actors. The production, however, is a sufficiently exciting romance with a breath of the wide open spaces of the North country. Dog teams and other properties of the locale add interest.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes — **Children, 8 to 12** Possible

▼

THE EX-MRS. BRADFORD » »

William Powell, Jean Arthur, James Gleason, Eric Blore, Robert Armstrong. From the story by James Edward Grant. Screen play by Anthony Veiller. Direction by Stephen Roberts. R.K.O.

Movie epicures wil greatly enjoy this clever detective play. It is partially reminiscent of "The Thin Man" in that it is a combination of flippant nonsense, nonchalant amateur sleuthing and a sinister crime, with the Nth degree of smart sophistication but without the alcohol and innuendoes. Also, Mr. Powell plays a role similar to the one he played in "The Thin Man" and is equally entertaining as the suave doctor who by chance becomes mixed up in solving the mystery of a jockey's death. Jean Arthur is the aggravating but very engaging young lady whom he has divorced because of her penchant for dabbling in murder mysteries. Along with the other good points this film can claim one of the most exciting horse races we have ever seen pictured.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Mature — **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

THE FIRST BABY » »

Johnny Downs, Shirley Deane, Jane Darwell, Marjorie Gateson, Gene Lockhart, Taylor Holmes, Willard Robertson, Dixie Dunbar, Hattie McDaniel. Original story and screen play by Lamar Trotti. Direction by Lewis Seiler. Twentieth Century-Fox.

In a short but poignant scene the family doctor epitomizes the real significance of marriage and parenthood to a bewildered girl mother whose understanding of her responsibility to husband and child has been clouded by a domineering mother. "The First Baby" is a human, touching and amusing little drama, just the sort of tasteful writing with which we associate the name of Lamar Trotti. The baby is completely captivating but does not obscure the other members of the excellent cast. Johnny Downs is unusually convincing as the boy, and the colored maid (Hattie McDonald) is perfect. It is a very entertaining picture, sincerely honest in its psychology and presenting with sympathetic understanding a theme that will interest all parents and young people.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Mature — **Children, 8 to 12** Beyond their understanding

THE GREAT ZIEGFELD » »

William Powell, Myrna Loy, Luise Rainer, Fannie Brice, Harriet Hoctor. Story and screen play by William Anthony McGuire. Direction by Robert Z. Leonard. Art direction by Cedric Gibbons. A Hunt Stromberg Production. M.G.M.

Much humor and not a little tragedy is found in this epic of the showman's life. Starting from the humble beginning of a barker at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893, we are shown "Ziggy" at all stages of his astonishing career of "glorifying the American girl." The story consists of a series of episodes of his life, his friends and his two great love affairs. Interspersed with the plot are perhaps the most gorgeous settings, dance ensembles, and costuming ever shown on stage or screen, representing scenes from his productions, from the "Follies" on. Honors for acting are carried off by William Powell as Ziegfeld and Luise Rainer as Anna Held. Miss Rainer does not particularly resemble Anna Held but gives a charming and appealing performance. Fannie Brice (herself) does an inimitable bit. Art direction by Cedric Gibbons is superlative, and Robert Z. Leonard's direction is excellent, although omission of a few incidents might have shortened the play to its advantage. The production will bring back fond memories of stars and music of a past generation.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Tiring because of three hour running time

▼

HARD LUCK DAME » »

Bette Davis, Warren Williams, Alison Skipworth, Arthur Treacher. Based on a novel by Dashiell Hammett. Screen play by Brown Holmes. Direction by William Dieterle. Warner Bros.

The search for a legendary "horn of plenty" by three theives and two young detectives leads to the arrest of the theives and a solving of the murder mystery. Bette Davis and Warren William are wasted in this improbable story. Comedy is overdone to the point of silliness. Although typical of its kind, this one seems to be poorer than usual.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No

Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

THE HARVESTER » »

Alice Brady, Russell Hardie, Ann Rutherford, Frank Craven, Cora Sue Collins, Emma Dunne, Eddie Nugent, Joyce Compton. From the novel by Gene Stratton Porter. Direction by Joseph Santley.

This is a pleasant, simple little picture telling the story of a young man who loves the country and wants to be a farmer. He becomes engaged to the daughter of the rich man of the town and overlooks a more suitable girl. When the rich girl shows that her interest is easily deflected by his lack of aspiration to become a business man, he returns to his farm and his country sweetheart. The settings and costumes of the period, about 1900, are well chosen. The young leads are attractive, and the acting is unaffected and sincere. However, the whole seems to lack inspiration. It is not distinguished in any way.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Probably enjoyable

Children, 8 to 12 Little interest

▼

HELL AT THE CIRCUS » »

Conrad Nagel. K.B.S. Production—Tiffany Studios.

This picture, a filler for a double bill, is incredibly banal and trite. Its type can be imagined from the sensational title. It is the sordid story of the loves of actors in a theatrical company touring the Middle West. Complications are introduced by the death of the manager's wife under most compromising circumstances, difficulties with the young son, and the failure of the show. The circus is dragged in at the last moment in order to show a spectacular fire scene. Finally all ends happily with general reconciliations and reunited lovers accepting a radio contract at a fabulous salary. The picture is a complete waste of time.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No

Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

HUMAN CARGO » »

Claire Trevor, Brian Donlevy, Alan Dinehart, Ralph Morgan, Rita Casino, John McGuire, Helen Troy. Based on the novel "I Will Be Faithful," by Kathleen Shepard. Screen play by Jefferson Parker and Doris Malley. Directed by Allan Dwan. 20Century-Fox.

The fact that occasional slips in the direction annoy one so much must prove that on the whole this detective story is actually very good. The plot is not especially original. A society girl joins the staff of a newspaper and pits her wits against the experience of a veteran reporter in hunting down the leader of a gang which smuggles aliens across our Southern border. The action is swift, the cast well chosen, the dialogue smart but not objectionable. However, when the characters stop to discuss personal relations in the midst of acute danger one feels tempted to yell, like the small

boy in the gallery at another melodrama, "Look out, lady, the villain is right behind you!"

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Very exciting

Children, 8 to 12 Not suitable

▼

I MARRIED A DOCTOR » »

Josephine Hutchinson, Pat Obrien, Ross Alexander, Guy Kibbee, Louise Fazenda. From the novel "Main Street" by Sinclair Lewis, dramatized by Harriet Ford and Harvey O'Higgens. Screen play by Casey Robinson. Direction by Archie Mayo. First National.

In this film, Sinclair Lewis' "Main Street" has been changed as to details which would have dated it, but its general theme has been retained. It is an interpretation of the narrow-minded cruelty of small town groups, and, while it is not conclusively presented it is interesting. The title is not significant for the heroine might as well have been married to any professional man. When the smartly dressed, modern, sophisticated young bride arrives in a provincial community she is misunderstood and socially crucified. In all fairness it may be said that she herself is neither entirely tactful nor understanding. Thus petty gossip and jealousy develop a serious situation. It is well cast and acted, and the small town setting is quite well done. As a whole the picture is entertaining, presenting an old truth in modern form.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Hardly suitable and not recommended

Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

THE LAW IN HER HANDS » »

Margaret Lindsay, Glenda Farrell, Warren Hull, Lyle Talbot. Original story by George Bricker. Direction by William Clemens. First National.

This picture differs from the usual gangster picture in that the law is represented by two women. *Mary Wentworth* and *Dorothy Davis,* from the time they agree to defend the gangster, enjoy great financial success in a long series of victories based on crooked practices. In the final analysis however, the murderer is outwitted and careers are abandoned in favor of matrimony. The acting is satisfactory but not outstanding. The plot is complicated and not entirely plausible but the picture holds some interest as an exposé of legal ruses and the "protection" racket.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No

Children, 8 to 12 No

LET'S SING AGAIN » »

Bobby Breen, Henry Armetta, George Houston. Original story, adaptation and screen play by Don Swift and Dan Jarrett. Directed by Kurt Neumann. R.K.O.-Pathe.

This picture is quite patently a vehicle manufactured for the express purpose of conveying young Bobby Breen of radio fame to motion picture prominence. It runs on the timeworn but ever tear jerking theme of the mistreated orphan boy who runs away from the asylum and is protected by the apparently hardboiled but actually sentimental older man from the dastardly attempts of the villain to adopt him for his own selfish purposes. How the boy is reunited with his long lost father is hard to believe but easily guessed. Bobby Breen's singing is remarkable, to say the least. Henry Armetta as Joe Pasquale, the worn out opera singer reduced to running a third rate road show, gives the outstanding performance of the film and wins completely the sympathy of the audience. "Diablo" (Grant Withers), lives up to his name and very nearly evokes audible hisses.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Good

▼

THE MOON'S OUR HOME » »

Margaret Sullavan, Henry Fonda, Charles Butterworth, Beulah Bondi, Walter Brennan, Henrietta Grosman. Screen play by Isabel Dawn and Boyce DeGaw. From an original by Faith Baldwin. Direction by William A. Seiter. Paramount.

A highly temperamental society girl who has become a movie star and an equally temeramental explorer-author are driven to desperation by their families and their publics. They meet, and hiding their identities from each other, go secretly to an out-of-the-way winter resort where their romance develops, with the question arising as to which temperament will win out. It is a light, gay farce with some very amusing dialogue contributed by Dorothy Parker and Alan Campbell. Beulah Bondi is as usual a delight, Henrietta Crosman an engaging tyrant, and Charles Butterworth ludicrous as an unwanted suitor. The leads manage to be charming in roles which are pretty noisy and ranting at times while the play pokes some good-natured fun at both celebrities and American idolaters.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Probably enjoyable

Children, 8 to 12 Harmless if it interests

MOONLIGHT MURDER » »

Chester Morris, Madge Evans, Leo Carillo, Grant Mitchell, H. B. Warner. Suggested by the story by Albert J. Cohen and Robert T. Shannon. Screen play by Florence Ryerson and Edgar Allan Woolf. Direction by Edwin L. Marin. M.G.M.

The Hollywood Bowl has been used for many purposes, never before for a murder mystery, but it proves an excellent setting for crime as well as music. The wavering lights, the rustle of wind in the trees, the lovely strains of *Il Trovatore* add substantially to the enjoyment of a picture which has an ingenious plot, involving a number of suspicious characters and a few who respond amiably to comedy situations. Another novelty is the use of euthanasia in pictures, but the result is less fortunate, because the doctor employs it in an arbitrary, unethical manner. Mercy-killing is a social problem which deserves more consideration than to be tossed off lightly at the end of a fast-moving mystery plot.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No — **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

MR. DEEDS GOES TO TOWN » »

Gary Cooper, Jean Arthur, George Bancroft, Douglas Dumbrille, Lionel Stander, A. B. Warner. From a story by Clarence Buddington Kelland. Screen story by Robert Riskin. Direction by Frank Capra. Columbia.

It is not often that we have the good fortune to see a picture which is such a completely satisfying combination of wit, pathos, high comedy and serious thought as "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town." The plot is extremely simple. A country boy inherits twenty million dollars. He goes to the city where he instantly becomes the prey of crooks and newsmongers. He learns some heartbreaking lessons in the perfidy of human beings until his native honesty and clear-sightedness uncover the weaknesses of his enemies. All this has been told before but seldom with such a delightful fusion of mischievous gaiety and stirring drama. To describe specific incidents in the picture would detract from its unexpectedness which is a part of its charm, but when you have seen it you will hurry to find a kindred spirit so that you may spend another evening enjoying it in retrospect. Mr. Capra is again in line for a gilded statuette and Gary Cooper is close beside him.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Delightful — **Children, 8 to 12** Probably beyond them

MURDER ON A BRIDLE PATH » »

James Gleason, Helen Broderick. From the novel by Stuart Palmer. Screen play by Dorothy Yost. Direction Edward Killy and William Hamilton. R.K.O.

Another one of the Inspector Piper Murder Mystery series with Helen Broderick succeeding Edna Mae Oliver as Hildegarde Withers. The plot is rather involved and some of the minor incidents are never cleared up. However, the picture has amusing dialogue as well as clever direction and good acting—a combination which makes it a pleasant evening's entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes — **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

O'MALLEY OF THE MOUNTED » »

George O'Brien, Irene Ware, Stanley Fields, James Bush, Victor Potel. From a story by William S. Hart. Direction by David Howard. Principal Productions. Distributed by 20th Century-Fox.

This story of a member of the Canadian Mounted Police who disguises himself and journeys through the wilderness to capture single-handed a band of desperadoes is greatly enhanced by the fine background of northern forests and mountains. It is a vigorous tale of danger and heroism with the usual love interest and a firm moral: in Canada retribution is swift and sure for those who live by crime. The cast is well chosen.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good — **Children, 8 to 12** Exciting

▼

ONE RAINY AFTERNOON » »

Francis Lederer, Ida Lupino, Hugh Herbert, Roland Young, Erik Rhodes, Joseph Cawthorn, Countess Liev De Maigret. Original story by Pressburger and Rene Pujal. Direction by Rowland V. Lee. Pickford-Lasky Productions. United Artists.

With a story so slight as to be almost none at all, this musical farce is nevertheless lightly entertaining. There is a sparkling freshness, a youthful charm about the leading characters that makes what they do seem relatively unimportant. Even though after the curtain falls one may have difficulty in remembering what it is all about, still it leaves a remembrance of pleasant nonsense and relaxing gaiety. The plot concerns a young Parisian actor who kisses the wrong girl in a darkened movie theatre and through the ensuing notoriety becomes a stage idol. The picture is handsomely mounted, mu-

sically attractive, the heroine is lovely to look at, and the hero all that one requires for this romantic trifle.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Probably appealing for girls

Children, 8 to 12 Little interest

▼

THE PENITENTE MURDER CASE » »

Photographed by Roland Price. Distributed by Stewart Productions, Inc. A Harry V. Revier Production.

The Holy Week rites of the Penitentes have received some newspaper publicity recently. The Penitentes are a flagellant order introduced into this country from Spain three hundred years ago, and their present membership consists of Spanish and Indian inhabitants of a few small adobe villages in the mountains of New Mexico. The film shows interesting views of rugged mountain scenery, the village and church of the order, and their quaint religious statues and paintings. The climb of the Christo and his companion flagellants to their mountain Calvary, each bearing a cross and being lashed at every step, fails to live up to the lurid description of blood and torture by the narrator or to the sensational advertising of the picture. The Christo is supposed to arrive at the summit drenched with blood, but his white robe is spotless as he is bound to the cross. The film ends with a picturization of an actual murder by the sect of a newspaperman a year ago, a scene both unnecessary and disgusting. The picture suffers from monotony, poor photography and bad lighting.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No

Children, 8 to 12 Impossible

▼

SHOW BOAT » »

Irene Dunne, Allan Jones, Paul Robeson, Charles Winninger, Helen Morgan, Helen Westley. Direction by A. James Whale. Universal-Carl Laemmle, Jr.

All the different presentations of "Show Boat," the novel, the stage version, and the first motion picture, lead up to this thrilling climax, the "Show Boat" of Irene Dunne, Paul Robeson, Allan Jones, Helen Morgan—in fact one should name the entire cast for all the members are worthy of special mention and all contribute to the many high spots of the picture. One especially enjoyable moment is when little white-haired *Andy Hawks,* Charles Winninger, owner of the "Show Boat," leaps on the stage to save his show by enthusiastically and violently taking every part in the performance. Another never-to-be-forgotten moment is when Paul Robeson sings "Old Man River" while a pageant of black and white etchings flash before our eyes, glimpses of negroes straining under bales of cotton, hoeing in the cotton fields, crowds of black faces pressing closer and closer around Robeson as the last notes of his magnificent voice die away. The photography is beautiful, done with imagination and restraint.

Irene Dunne is charming as *Magnolia* and Allan Jones, a handsome *Ravenal.* Their beautifully blended voices strike a note of glamour and romance far removed from the grimness and immediacy of reality. The singing rises spontaneously out of situations in the story avoiding completely any sense of artificiality. The whole is a skillful blending of drama and music, of excitement nicely balanced with sentiment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes

Children, 8 to 12 Yes

▼

THE SKY PARADE » »

Jimmie Allen, Katherine DeMille, William Gargan, Kent Taylor, Grant Withers. Screen play by Byron Morgan, Brain Marlow, Arthur Beckhard. Direction by Otho Lovering. Paramount.

As an exposition of the progress made in commercial aviation since the close of the World War, this picture has a definite educational value. Jimmie Allen, known to many through the radio serial, is made the central figure, and from a time preceding the armistice when he is left a motherless babe, the various events in his life coincide with important developments in flying. With such vital and instructive material, this should have been an outstanding film. Unfortunately the melodramatic treatment makes it tiresome for many adults, and the love affairs of the grown-ups in the cast make several sequences tiresome for children. Nevertheless, anyone who is keenly interested in aviation, regardless of age, will be able to overlook the faults and find much that is of value in this picture.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 If interested

▼

SMALL TOWN GIRL » »

Janet Gaynor, Robert Taylor, Binnie Barnes, James Stewart, Lewis Stone, Elizabeth Patterson, Andy Devine, Mary Forbes. From the novel by Ben Ames Williams. Direction by William Wellman. M.G.M.

Although a "gin" marriage is a poor point of departure for any young people, when the haze lifts, *Kay* and *Bob* are very genuine and worthwhile, and their problem and that of the boy's parents in working out an unpropitious situation wins the sympathy and undivided attention of the audience. It is

the cast which makes the play; the sincerity of Janet Gaynor and Robert Taylor enables them to avoid the slur of sensationalism, and the other actors are uniformly pleasing. Credit is due for the good taste with which difficult moments are treated, the amusing use of incident, natural conversation, up-to-date direction.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Needs mature judgment to evaluate

Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

SONS O' GUNS » »

Joe E. Brown, Joan Blondell, Beverly Roberts, Eric Blore. From the play by Fred Thompson and Jack Donahue. Screen play by Jerry Wald and Julius J. Epstein. Directed by Lloyd Bacon. Warner Bros.

Another Joe E. Brown picture in the typical Joe E. Brown style—perfectly silly and yet it may be of some real value in that it joins the "Veterans of Future Wars" movement in making fun of war, and very few men or things can stand up against ridicule. Joe E. Brown plays the part of an actor playing the part of a doughboy in a benefit performance on Broadway soon after the U.S. has entered the World War. To impress a girl he rushes into the street in makeup and joins a regiment on its way to embark for France, but finds it easier to get into the ranks than out again. He is next seen in France, and the manner in which he wins high honors for bravery evokes many a laugh at the expense of the unwilling doughboy and the heroics of war.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Amusing

Children, 8 to 12 Yes

▼

SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR » »

Richard Dix, Margaret Callahan, Erik Rhodes. From the novel by Erle Stanley Gardner. Direction Louis King. RKO.

A brilliant criminal lawyer devotes his abilities to the defense of gangsters until the murder of his brother, a Federal agent, brings him to his senses. The rest is concerned with the means by which he avenges his brother's death and in doing so exposes a notorious gang who are operating a fake gold mine in the vicinity of Reno. The success of this picture is a tribute to clever direction and camera work and an excellent use of suspense. The story with an obvious and hackneyed plot is so dramatically told that it seems new. Much of the photography has been made at night symbolizing the dark and devious ways of gangsters as well as lending mystery to the dramatic scenes.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No; because of too sordid atmosphere

Children, 8 to 12 No

SUTTER'S GOLD » »

Edward Arnold, Lee Tracy, Binnie Barnes. Suggested by the novel by Blaise Cendrars. Direction by James Cruze. Universal.

Sutter's Gold represents a lost opportunity. With careful research and adherence to true details it might have been a valuable historical drama of one of the greatest figures in the development of California. The audience is warned at the beginning that it is fiction based on the life of Sutter by Blaise Cendrars. Even if it had conformed to the book it might have been a magnificent film, for the author, if not profound, has based his biography on letters and old documents. The bare outlines of the picture are true for Sutter did build up a vast agrarian domain, which was destroyed by the horde of gold-miners, and he did spend his declining years seeking redress in Washington. Otherwise the story has been cheapened and falsified until it occasionally resembles the ordinary western. To say that it is without merit is of course untrue. Edward Arnold creates a splendid characterization of Sutter, rugged, commanding, intrepid in the active years of his life, very touching as a graybeard. Lee Tracy contributes a good touch of comedy. There is spirited action, and a true flavor of pioneer days in many episodes.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Only fair

Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

THINGS TO COME » »

Raymond Massey, Edward Chapman, Ralph Richardson, Margaretta Scott, Pearl Argyle, Kenneth Villers. Written for the screen by H. G. Wells from his novel "The Shape of Things to Come." Direction by William Cameron Menzies. London Films. Released by United Artists.

Dust off your seven-league boots and don the strongest wings of your imagination for a journey into the near and distant future under the personal supervision of H. G. Wells. You will see the maniacal war urge of present day humanity culminate in a struggle so devastating that only the tatters of civilization are left, while a heart-breaking pestilence reduces the remnant of the population to the conditions of the Dark Ages with ignorant, braggart dictators in control. Then from the ashes arises a new world controlled by the scientists, a marvellous, mechanical era in which the machines are beautiful as well as wonderfully efficient and in keeping with the perfectly planned immaculate cities inhabited by the people of the future. Then having put our planet in clock-working order, the New Man presses on to conquer the universe by means of a daring new contrivance, the space-gun.

There is much food for thought in the picture: a potent sermon against war and the inspiring forecast of the great things which are possible if citizens of all nations can be induced to work together for the common good. Acting is restrained and efficient. Technically the film is a joy. While war scenes are powerful, brutality is held to a minimum, and the new order of science is an awe-inspiring spectacle, which in all probability even our descendants an hundred years from now will never see, a Wellsian Heaven-On-Earth.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fascinating

Children, 8 to 12 Too mature and too long

▼

TILL WE MEET AGAIN » »

Herbert Marshall, Gertrude Michael, Lionel Atwill. From the play by Alfred Davis. Direction by Robert Florey. Paramount.

This is the age-old conflict between a man's love and his duty to his country. An English actor and a Viennese actress are about to be married in London when the world war breaks, and the girl, realizing she will be regarded as an enemy and being already a member of her country's secret service, departs for her homeland. According to the formula so often employed, the lovers' paths cross again when both are working as spies, and after heartaches and narrow escapes all ends well. The plot is old and is weakened by the happy ending but the development has been so well handled by both actors and director that interest is sustained. The picture is a good war melodrama.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Mature

Children, 8 to 12 Too exciting

▼

TIMES SQUARE PLAYBOY » »

Reviewed in April under title "Broadway Playboy."

▼

TOO MANY PARENTS » »

Frances Farmer, Lester Matthews, Porter Hall. From stories by George Templeton and Jesse Lynch Williams. Direction by Robert F. McGowan. Paramount.

Too many parents, or too few, are equally bad for children when the parents are too self-centered to give them understanding love. This is the theme of a picture dealing with the pathetic unhappiness of a sensitive boy who has been placed in a military school while his busy father is so occupied with his own interests that he pays no attention to his son. While the treatment of the subject is rather sentimental and the children often seem a little unnatural in their reactions in order to fit the needs of the plot, there is enough sincerity and truth in the film to make an appealing story. Audiences who are fond of child actors will enjoy the young cast, and many will see in the picture a much needed lesson for thoughtless mothers and fathers.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Passable, though perhaps too emotional

Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

UNDER TWO FLAGS » »

Ronald Colman, Claudette Colbert, Victor McLaglen, Rosalind Russell, Gregory Ratoff. From the novel by Ouida. Screen play by W. P. Lipscomb and Walter Ferris. Directed by Frank Lloyd. 20th Century-Fox.

Ouida's book has thrilled a generation, and the film version of this romantic tale is destined to bring new thrills. Proving that unadulterated hokum can be incorporated in a picture without marring its effectiveness, "Under Two Flags" tells an improbable yarn so sincerely and so touchingly that even hardboiled audiences will cry and like it. The Foreign Legion is unfailing in its allure. The mystery of the desert, the menace of half savage Abyssinian hordes, moonlight and a beautiful woman on a desert oasis and some of the most terrific battle scenes ever photographed, all add their sure appeal. Ronald Colman is the mysterious Legionnaire, Claudette Colbert is *Cigarette,* the girl who rode across the desert to her death to save him. Victor McLaglen is the hot-headed *Sergeant Victor* who is clay in the hands of the adroit *Cigarette.* All are well cast and play their parts with understanding and ability. For tender-hearted or emotional persons some of the scenes are pretty strong meat, but as a stirring tale of romantic adventure this is ace high entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Very exciting

Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

THE UNGUARDED HOUR » »

Franchot Tone, Loretta Young, Lewis Stone, Roland Young, Jessie Ralph, Dudley Digges Henry Daniell, Aileen Pringle. Based on the play of the same name by Ladialaus Feodor. Direction by Sam Wood. M.G.M.

A situation of fine irony arises when the prosecutor for the Crown finds himself entangled in a mass of circumstances as incriminating as those surrounding the man on trial for his life, and he as well as the defendant is helpless to escape the death penalty unless he can find the one person who can furnish him an alibi. It is a particularly interesting story of the English criminal court, and except for one slight point the

procedure is accurate enough to satisfy an exacting lawyer. There are fine settings both in the court room and in the drawing-rooms in which a good part of the picture takes place. Franchot Tone is very human as the young barrister who finds it difficult completely to reconcile his conscience with high ambitions; Loretta Young as his wife has a part which requires more sublety and restraint than her usual roles, and she fills it well; Lewis Stone as the head of Scotland Yard and Henry Daniell as the blackguard are worthy of praise. Ninety per cent of the laughs go to Roland Young who has the best lines and effects such natural comedy relief that a normal attitude is maintained, and the film never becomes what it easily might have been, the morbid story of two crimes.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Too sophisticated

Children, 8 to 12
No

THE WITNESS CHAIR » »

Ann Harding, Walter Abel, Douglas Dumbrille. Direction by George Nichols, Jr. RKO.

Due to an artificial method of telling the story by flash-backs, and the use of dialogue rather than action, this film grows rather tedious. The plot starts after a murder has been committed. A rich man has been shot and various witnesses are questioned in court. As the audience already knows who is guilty the only interest is in the way the evidence is brought out, seeming to point first to an innocent man. Admirers of Ann Harding will be disappointed that she has not been cast in a more unusual picture. This one is apparently patterned after "The Trial of Mary Dugan," but is not so cleverly constructed.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No

Children, 8 to 12
No

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JUNE 1936

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Private Number
Sins of Man
*Song of China
*Speed
Trouble for Two
Two Against the World
*The White Angel

*Film suitable for family entertainment but not necessarily appropriate for children under 12 or for children unaccompanied by adults.

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WEBBCRAFT PRINTERS, 2509 WEST WASHINGTON BLVD., LOS ANGELES

MOTION • PICTURE • REVIEWS

Published monthly by
THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB
LOS ANGELES BRANCH
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

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Address all communications to THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB, 943 South Hoover St., Los Angeles, Calif.
10c Per Copy - - $1.00 Per Year

Vol. IX **JUNE, 1936** **No. 6**

FEATURE FILMS

ANTHONY ADVERSE « »

Frederic March, Olivia de Haviland, Donald Woods, Anita Louise, Edmund Gwenn, Claude Rains, Louis Hayward, Gale Sondergaard, Steffi Duna, Billy Mauch. From the novel by Hervey Allen. Screen play by Sheridan Gibney. Directed by Mervyn LeRoy. Warner Bros.

This picture will be absorbing entertainment for everyone and of particular interest to those who have read the novel, because, besides enjoying the story, the latter group will be afforded a valuable close-up of the cutting that has been done on a very long novel in order to confine it within the limits of an evening's entertainment. It runs for more than two hours but there will be no weariness on the part of the audience, for so skilfully are the sequences arranged that the interest never languishes. Especial credit should be given the adaptation for achieving with such signal success a difficult feat in abridgement. The opening scenes are particularly well done, conveying an atmosphere of the bygone era which sets the tone for the picture throughout. As the young orphan whose story unfolds in Italy, Cuba, France and Africa finds himself first in one setting, then another, the backdrop for the vivid events of his life forms an ever shifting but always authentic environment. The foundling boy, raised during his early years by the Sisters in a convent and later transformed to the home of a Scotch merchant (who is in reality his maternal grandfather) acquires an education and a business training unusual even in those brilliant days of European culture. On a business mission he goes to Cuba for his benefactor, thence to Africa, where the lust for power and wealth transform him from a debonair young cosmopolite to a rapacious slave trader. In one of the most dramatic scenes of the picture he is turned from this course by the noble martyrdom of a priest and returns to Italy to gather up and weave together the ragged threads of his life. His early love affair and secret marriage are delicately portrayed and the story moves to a logical and convincing climax. In fact, one could wish that the novelist had used the restraint which makes the picture notable and thus saved the reader the succession of anticlimaxes which the movie audience is spared. The acting, even in the roles of the minor characters is exceptional and has produced a picture of outstanding beauty and dignity.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Mature **Children, 8 to 12** No

BORDER FLIGHT « »

Frances Farmer, John Howard, Roscoe Karns, Grant Withers, Samuel S. Hinds. From a story by Ewing Scott. Direction by Otho Lovering. Paramount.

A thoroughly obnoxious air pilot redeems himself in a drama reminiscent of CEILING ZERO. PAT TORNELL is the scapegrace aviator whose infractions of rules keeps his unit in constant turmoil until a sudden burst of nobility induces him to aid in the destruction of a gang of fur smugglers. Good photography, able direction and a stream of clever dialogue save the film from mediocrity. Anti-social qualities are shown to a great disadvantage in contrast to the courage, high sportsmanship and devotion to duty of aviators in the coast guard service.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fair

Children, 8 to 12 No

BULLETS OR BALLOTS « »

Edward G. Robinson, Joan Blondell, Humphrey Bogart, Barton MacLane, Frank McHugh. From a story by Martin Mooney and Seton I. Miller. Direction by William Keighley. WarnerBros.-First National.

Although this is a gangster story, it is told from a constructive angle, exposing racketeers in all their dishonesty, depravity and utter brutality and proving that upright officials, supported by an aroused public opinion have the power to abolish the forces of crime. Edward G. Robinson is cast not as a gangster but as a fearless defender of the law; his performance is outstanding. The film, handled with fine dignity and restraint, moves logically and swiftly to the conclusion. It is a slight shock to have bankers, who have come in for much condemnation during recent years, made the ringleaders of consolidated rackets. One doubts if they are responsible for all evil. However, the main trend of the picture is constructive and has definite social value.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes

Children, 8 to 12 Too harrowing

BUNKER BEAN « »

Owen Davis, Louise Latimer. Story by Harry Leon Wilson. Direction by William Hamilton. R.K.O.

This light comedy concerns the ludicrous efforts of a young man, who is hampered by an inferiority complex, to become a positive and a forceful man of affairs. Consulting an occultist he learns that he is a reincarnation of Napoleon Bonaparte, and straightway attempts to emulate in his business and social life that dynamic personality. The comedy of the resultant scenes are not without a touch of pathos, and the young man, seeing that he must have been misled, finds in an ancient Egyptian ruler another model of conduct. In the end, he achieves success through realizing his own inherent powers and wins the lady of his heart. It is light diversion, but good psychology. The acting, save that of the leading man, is somewhat overdone and the direction not notable, but the play is a good average performance of its type.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12 Little interest

THE CASE OF THE VELVET CLAWS « »

Warren William, Claire Dodd, Winifred Shaw, Kenneth Harlan, Joseph King. From the story by Erle Stanley Gardner. Direction by William Clemens. First National.

If one is entertained by rapid action alone this mystery film may provide diversion. It is an incoherent jumble of events told in a would-be humorous manner. A former criminal lawyer is forced to defend a woman from the attacks of a scandal sheet and becomes involved in a murder mystery. Even Warren William has a hard time living up to his reputation as an actor under the handicap of such a poor scenario.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No

Children, 8 to 12 No

CHAMPAGNE CHARLIE « »

Paul Cavanagh, Helen Wood, Thomas Beck, Minna Gombell, Herbert Mundin. Screen play by Allen Riskin. Direction by James Tinglin. Twentieth Century-Fox.

In order to free an innocent man of a murder charge, a young girl who is being blackmailed, tells of her infatuation for a gambler. Her experiences are pictured in flashbacks. It is not a pleasant tale and it is not told with sufficient artistry nor drama to hold one's undivided attention. After it is over one feels the futility of the hour spent in its unfoldment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No

Children, 8 to 12 No

DANCING PIRATE « »

Charles Collins, Frank Morgan, Steffi Duna, Luis Alberni. Story by Emma Lindsey Squier. Direction by Lloyd Corrigan. Produced in the new Technicolor. Pioneer Pictures. Distributed by R.K.O.

As full of chuckles as a Gilbert and Sullivan opera, as light and fanciful as the tinkling music box which accompanies the agile steps of the dancing master, this is a delightful film from beginning to end. It illustrates the great progress made in color photography, in the warm browns and candle-light yellows of the New England ballroom, as well as the clear blues of California skies and the sumptuous reds and golds of the Spanish pueblo. Some of the scenes are so lovely it would be a joy to see them over and over again. The hero of it all is one Jonathan Pride, shanghaied by pirates and carried to far-off Western lands, where he escapes from many perils and woos the alcalde's dark-eyed daughter. Charles Collins is a dancer of no mean talent, and Frank Morgan demonstrates a real gift for comedy in the part of the bombastic alcalde.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent **Children, 8 to 12** Excellent

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DRACULA'S DAUGHTER « »

Otto Kruger, Gloria Holden, Marguerite Churchill, Irving Pichel, Edward Van Sloan. Screen play by Garrett Ford. Direction by Lambert Hillyer. Universal.

The baleful influence of the vampire is again at large, and the daughter of Dracula is worthy of her heritage. While the tale is full of dramatic moments and fine suspense, it all remains in the realm of the weird and fantastic: even the normal people in the picture seem to have borrowed supernatural characteristics. Lighting, photography and all embellishments are used to heighten the effect. The ethical or social value is slight, although evil influences are vanquished in the end. Appreciation depends on the value the individual places on the strange and eerie. Many will thoroughly enjoy it, and others consider it a zero mark in entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too strong **Children, 8 to 12** Terrifying

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FATAL LADY « »

Mary Ellis, Walter Pidgeon, John Halliday, Alan Mowbray, Guy Bates Post, Ruth Donnelly. Direction by Edward Ludwig. Walter Wanger-Paramount.

This is a musical murder mystery film which though slow moving is interesting. It is exceptionally well cast and beautifully photographed. Introducing Mary Ellis to film audiences it tells the story of a young opera singer whose admirers always meet with violent death. In spite of her apparently fine character and exemplary behavior she is suspected of complicity in their murders and travels from one country to another trying to continue her career as a singer and to escape the evil spell that hangs over her. At last a man who loves her rescues her by discovering the person who has committed all the murders. Rehearsals of the opera troupe serve to bring in the music, which is unusually well-adapted to the mood of the picture. The whole production is in excellent taste.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes **Children, 8 to 12** Too mature

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FLORIDA SPECIAL » «

Jack Oakie, Sally Eilers, Kent Taylor, Frances Drake, J. Farrell MacDonald. From a story by Clarence Budington Kelland. Direction by Ralph Murphy. Paramount.

Here is a mystery story which makes little attempt at intelligent or logical development, but which is swift and amusing enough to hold one's attention. It concerns a few hours on the "Florida Special" and includes a jewel robbery, a murder, and a bit of romance. The pace is swift and exciting. The social standards are more suitable to adult discount than to children's appreciation.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No **Children, 8 to 12** No

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FORGOTTEN FACES » «

Herbert Marshall, Gertrude Michael, James Burke, Robert Cummings, Jane Rhodes. Based on a story by Richard Washburn Child. Direction by E. A. Dupont. Para.

In this story an unselfish father strives to circumvent a vicious mother in her attempt to blackmail the people who have adopted their daughter. It is a sordid, sensational tale, but the fine acting of Herbert Marshall gives it the warmth of human interest, and the love-story of the young girl and her childhood sweetheart provides a refreshing contrast to the tawdry events of the early scenes. The play is well cast, the plot well developed, and a great effort has been made to raise the production above the level set by a melodramatic theme.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Not recommended **Children, 8 to 12** No

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FURY » «

Sylvia Sidney, Spencer Tracy, Bruce Cabot, Walter Abel. Based on a story by Norman Krasna. Direction by Fritz Lang. M-G-M.

FURY is an indictment of the mob spirit

which impells men to commit brutal crimes on the strength of mere gossip or a jot of circumstantial evidence. It is out and out propaganda against lynching, cruel and direct in its expression. Spencer Tracy gives a fine performance, as does Sylvia Sidney and several others in the cast, and the picture is built up to a powerful climax. It is a timely subject, for lynching, with a certain percentage of innocent victims, still goes on, but unless one feels that one's moral fiber needs reinforcement, the film is such vivid realism that it should be avoided.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Too brutal

Children, 8 to 12
Too brutal

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THE GOLDEN ARROW

Bette Davis, George Brent, Eugene Pallette, Carol Hughes. Direction by Alfred E. Green. First National.

Although Bette Davis reveals a flair for light comedy and gives a semblance of reality to a rather superficial part, those who expect an outstanding performance whenever they see her will find this an exception to the rule. Based on the hypothesis that the makers of nationally advertised products will go to any lengths to attract public notice, a pretty cafeteria cashier is elevated to the status of an heiress, equipped with a yacht and lordly hotel suites which assure her the avid attentions of titled fortune-hunters. In the end she finds that all that glitters is not gold. It is the glitter, however, which makes the film worth the fancy of a passing hour. There are lovely settings, apt dialogue and an array of attractive costumes. Credit is due Carol Hughes for her able characterization of HORTENSE, nouveau riche daughter of a Texas oil magnate.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Possible

Children, 8 to 12
Sophisticated

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THE GREEN PASTURES » «

Rex Ingram, Oscar Polk, Eddie Anderson, Frank Wilson, George Reed. A fable by Marc Connelly. Suggested by Roark Bradford's southern sketches "Ol' Man Adam an' His Chillun." Directed by Marc Connelly and William Keighley. Photography by Hal Mohr. Warner Bros.

The Biblical fable "Green Pastures" is artistic, amusing and inspiring. This poignantly moving work really deserves the much abused adjective "notable." The story of Genesis is told to a Sunday school class of little negro children by a kindly old preacher and we see it as they picture it with all the primitive, naïve quality of their understanding and with the spiritual significance of their interpretation. The film follows the play version, but because of the mechanics of the different medium it is more impressive in many scenes. Possibly the highly imaginative flood will be remembered longest, but there are a number of other high spots which are equally unusual and artistic, and the superb musical background unifies the whole. The sincerity of the acting raises a difficult theme to a position of dignity. Rex Ingram as "de Lawd" is very fine. Endowed with human qualities, he is not always infallible, but he is always great and his decisions are inevitable. One realizes, with him, that being God is "not a bed of roses." With no well known names in the cast, there are a number of exceptional performances, from the tiniest cherub to GABRIEL, NOAH, MOSES and DE LAWD. Although it depicts the beliefs of a simple people, the film calls for a certain amount of sophistication in order to appreciate it. Those who take their own religion too literally may be offended but for those who understand, it cannot fail to give a real feeling of religion and a deeper understanding of a simple, childlike race.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Excellent

Children, 8 to 12
Good with explanatory assistance

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HALF ANGEL » «

Frances Dee, Brian Donlevy, Charles Butterworth, Helen Westley, Henry Stephenson, Etienne Girardot. Based on a story by Tennyson Jesse. Direction by Sidney Lanfield. Twentieth Century-Fox.

A young girl, twice placed in jeopardy of her life, once for the murder of her father and later for the murder of an older woman who has befriended her, is rescued by a young newspaper reporter who solves the mystery of the crimes. Settings are very attractive and the cast is pleasing, but several situations are far-fetched, and on the whole the film is only moderately entertaining.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Passable

Children, 8 to 12
No

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JAIL BREAK » «

Craig Reynolds, June Travis, Barton Mac Lane, Richard Purcell. Direction by Nick Grinde. Warner Bros.

As a mystery story, this is not interesting because all steps in deduction are omitted. As a gangster story it lacks any subtle over tone that might compensate

for its unpleasantness and as a sociological study it has no value since all claims to authenticity are denied in a foreword. It is merely a most unwholesome pot-boiler depicting the violent encounters between two underworld characters who happen to have been incarcerated in the same prison.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No

Children, 8 to 12 Impossible; terrifying

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THE LAST OUTLAW « »

Harry Carey, Hoot Gibson, Russel Hopton, Margaret Callahan. Story by John Ford and Murray Campbell. Direction by Christy Cabanne. R.K.O.

Westerns should have human appeal and good ones ring the bell for movie audiences. This one does. Harry Carey plays the role of a man who returns to his home town as an ex-convict who wishes to go straight. A bank robbery places him under immediate suspicion of the police. One official trusts him and his knowledge of criminal psychology and probable hide-outs comes in handy. It is highly dramatic, fast in action, and immensely funny at times, with none of the brutal cruelty so common to the general run of modern Westerns.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Passable to those who are habitual movie fans

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LOVE BEGINS AT TWENTY « »

Herbert Mundin, Warren Hull, Patricia Ellis, Dorothy Cavanaugh, Hobart Cavanaugh. From the play by Martin Flavin. Screen play by Dalton Trumbo and Tom Reed. Direction by Frank McDonald. First National.

The story of a hen-pecked husband whose wife nags and berates him constantly is stock form No. 1 for the old-time Keystone comedy type of film. This one follows true to form. Hugh Herbert, with his befuddled gestures and apparent mental distress is always amusing but the story is hardly worth his efforts. It is the sort of simple, foolish tale which fills an idle hour, however, and provides relaxation and laughs for many.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Depends on taste

Children, 8 to 12 Not elevating

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NOBODY'S FOOL

Edward E. Horton, Glenda Farrell, Cesar Romero, Frank Conroy, Florence Roberts. Story by Frank M. Dazey. Direction by Arthur Greville Collins. Universal.

Cut and tailored to the measurements of Edward Everett Horton, this picture would be impossible with anyone else in the title role. Those who enjoy Horton, and the list is long, will find it full of naive absurdities, and delicately balanced situations. As a small-town waiter with a high purpose, i.e., good housing conditions for the masses, he seeks a larger field in New York and in a series of misunderstandings outwits a group of swindlers by his very honesty. Perhaps there is a superfluity of crooks in the film—even the heroine belongs to that category—but they all fall under the benign influence of the aspiring waiter and agree to mend their ways. With Horton's help one can believe it for the moment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Amusing

Children, 8 to 12 Little interest

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PRIVATE NUMBER « »

Robert Taylor, Loretta Young, Basil Rathbone, Patsy Kelly. Based on a play by Cleves Kinkead. Direction by Roy Del Ruth. Twentieth Century-Fox.

Under a camouflaged title, this is the old, old story of a lady's maid falling in love with her employer's son and being persecuted by the purse-proud family. It is entertaining only because it is a vehicle for the ascendant Robert Taylor and lovely Loretta Young, but it chalks up nothing on their scores because it is intrinsically trashy. Motives are confused, situations forced, direction not remarkable.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Poor

Children, 8 to 12 No

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SINS OF MAN « »

Jean Hersholt, Don Ameche, Allen Jenkins, Fritz Leiber. Based on the story "Job" by Joseph Roth. Direction by Otto Brower and Gregory Ratoff. Twentieth Century-Fox.

Like "Job" in the novel upon which this film is based, the chief character suffers most of the trials and tribulations with which man may be afflicted and yet never loses his faith in God. The story opens in 1900. CHRIS FREYMAN, Jean Hersholt, is the sexton of a little church in the Tyrol. He rings the church chimes and teaches the little choir singers. Music, church duties and his family happily absorb his life. Then tragedy comes, and for years afterwards one sorrow after another is visited upon him. His wife dies in giving birth to a deaf son, another son leaves home, war blots out the little village. In the end the old man finds peace and happiness.

It is not in the plot that the film excels, it is in the touchingly human little episodes that make up the story and in the life-like characterizations. Jean Hersholt is superb. Through his interpretation the character of CHRIS FREYMAN is unforgetable.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes, but too depressing for some

Children, 8 to 12 Too sad

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SONG OF CHINA « »

Lim Cho-cho, Shang Kwah-wu, Li Shoh-shoh, Chang Yih, Chen Yen-yen, Chen Chun-li, Mei Ling. Author: Chung Shih-kan. Direction by Lo Ming-yau. Presented by Mr. Douglas MacLean.

It is an unusual experience to see a film of this kind in which not only the actors, but every idea which motivates their lives is intrinsically Chinese. The acting is superb in its restraint, symbolism is used throughout, and while the story moves at snail's pace according to American standards, it has a distinct artistic and educational value. The theme, filial obedience, is carried through three generations of a Chinese family, in which the second rebells against the system, and the third returns to admit the perfection of the code and to do obeisance to his ancestors.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Worth while

Children, 8 to 12 Tiring

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SPEED « »

James Stewart, Wendy Barrie, Una Merkel, Weldon Weyburn, Ted Healy. From a story by Milton Krims and Larry Bachman. Direction by Edwin L. Marin. M-G-M.

The story is built around the invention and perfection of a new type of carburetor for high speed automobiles and is made effective by the realistic background of a modern motor plant and thrilling auto races. The rivalry of two men over the niece of the owner of the huge factory is of secondary importance, and while some of the acting is very capable, the chief appeal is for those interested in automobile racing and up-to-date methods of manufacture.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Of especial interest to boys

Children, 8 to 12 Too exciting

TROUBLE FOR TWO « »

Robert Montgomery, Rosalind Russell, Frank Morgan, Reginald Owen, Louis Hayward. Based on "The Suicide Club" by Robert Louis Stevenson. Direction by J. Walter Ruben. M-G-M.

This is a new arrangement of Stevenson's tale of the "Young Man With the Cream Tarts" and the "Suicide Club," which one will recall, was not morbid at all, but a charming mixture of adventure and romance with a humor all its own. PRINCE FLORIZEL comes to London on a thirty-day junket before his marriage to a princess whom he remembers as an ill-favored child and soon finds himself in the thick of fantastic experiences and hair-breadth escapes. Characterizations are excellent; the highly imaginative quality is sustained, backgrounds are charming; in short it is very good Stevenson. The idea of a secret society which deals out death is too blood-chilling for children, but for those old enough to accept it as a modern fairy-tale, it is an entertaining and unusual production.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes

Children, 8 to 12 No

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TWO AGAINST THE WORLD « »

Humphrey Bogart, Beverly Roberts, Linda Perry, Carlyle Moore, Jr., Helen MacKellar, Henry O'Neill, Harry Hayden. Screen play by Michel Jacoby. Direction by William McGann. First National.

It seems futile to stir an audience to the marrow over the infamies of a bootleg radio corporation which "must not be identified with any existing company." The insatiable greed of the president impels him to hale before the public a woman who has been exonerated for a crime committed many years before with results that are swift and tragic. Even if one enjoys a theme such as this, the production lacks power because dramatic crises are vitiated by hysteria, and interest is divided among too many, more or less, important characters.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Poor

Children, 8 to 12 No

THE WHITE ANGEL » «

Kay Francis, Ian Fuller, Donald Woods, Nigel Bruce, Donald Crisp, Henry O'Neill. Screen play by Mordaunt Shairp. Art director, Anton Grot. Direction by William Dieterle. Warner.

The popularity of honest, biographical films is an encouraging indication of public taste. The drama in the lives of great men and women is inspiring to youth and age and Florence Nightingale is a character who might soon become a myth to all but the nursing profession whose inspiration she still is. Warner Brothers has given us a picture whose sincerity and verity will be a deep source of satisfaction to all. When Florence Nightingale was a girl, nursing was an ignominious profession. Her father's investigation of the frightful conditions in London hospitals gave her the purpose in life for which she had been groping. In the face of opposition she studied nursing in Germany and finally because of the intolerable situations in the military hospitals in the Crimea, her services were accepted by the English government. Taking thirty-eight nurses with her she made history and raised the nursing profession to a position of authority and respect.

The role is a new departure for Miss Francis. It has deep drama, but none of the lighter characteristics of her usual parts, and she is splendid in it. The film is restrained and dignifed and is a fine contribution to inspirational biographical drama.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fine

Children, 8 to 12 Harrowing in parts

THE ROAD TO GLORY » «

Fredric March, Warner Baxter, Lionel Barrymore, June Lang. Screen play by Joel Sayre and William Faulkner. Direction by Howard Hawks. Twentieth Century-Fox.

Written perhaps to emphasize the utter futility of war, THE ROAD TO GLORY is a strangely indecisive film. Yet no one should come away from seeing it with any sentimental flag waving emotions. The battle scenes are terrible in their ferocity and noise, those in the trenches and dugouts are frightening in the sinister way impending destruction is depicted, and the episode of the unfortunate soldier caught on the barbed wire who cannot be rescued is one of the most terrible in its realism which we have ever seen. There is no thrilling "glory" in this war. The scene is laid in France. The soldiers are French. The captain harangues each new battalion with the same speech, demanding no spectacular heroism but the utmost individual effort to maintain the high record of the regiment which has proudly existed since Napoleon's era. The contrasting characters of two officers are well acted by Warner Baxter and Fredric March and the somewhat sentimental and unnatural role given Lionel Barrymore is played to the full by that grand old trouper. One flaw is the inevitable love interest. The girl is inappropriately costumed and inadequately played by a new comer to the screen but some of the absurdities of the part should be laid, we surmise, to the director. The horror and uselessness of war are shown by the picture. As a social indictment it serves its purpose. It is a good but not a great film.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Depends on individual

Children, 8 to 12 Too harrowing

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Story of Louis Pasteur, The - - January
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T

These Three - - - - - - March
Things to Come - - - - - May
13 Hours by Air - - - - - April
Three Godfathers, The - - - - March
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Y

Yellow Dust - - - - - - March

MOTION PICTURE REVIEWS

THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

JULY 1936

For practical use we suggest filing bulletins where they may be easily accessible for reference. Films are not released simultaneously over the country. You will need these reviews for constant reference.

Feature Films Reviewed in this Issue

*And Sudden Death
*The Arizona Raiders
Bengal Tiger
The Bride Walks Out
The Crime of Dr. Forbes
*Down the Stretch
*Early to Bed
*Earthworm Tractors
*Educating Father
The Girl of the Ozarks
*Hearts Divided
High Tension
Hot Money
*It's Love Again
*Nine Days a Queen
*Palm Springs
Parole
*Poor Little Rich Girl
*Poppy
Public Enemy's Wife
*The Princess Comes Across
*San Francisco
*Three on the Trail
Three Wise Guys
Trailin' West
We Are From Kronstadt
We Went to College
Women Are Trouble

*Film suitable for family entertainment but not necessarily appropriate for children under 12 or for children unaccompanied by adults.

THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB
LOS ANGELES BRANCH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN
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WEBBCRAFT PRINTERS, 2509 WEST WASHINGTON BLVD., LOS ANGELES

MOTION • PICTURE • REVIEWS

Published monthly by

THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB

LOS ANGELES BRANCH

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

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10c Per Copy - - $1.00 Per Year

Vol. X JULY, 1936 No. 1

NOTICE

We wish to call the attention of our readers to a pamphlet called "A Course of Study in Motion-Picture Appreciation," by Alice P. Sterner, Barringer High School, Newark, New Jersey, and W. Paul Bowden, East Orange High School, East Orange, New Jersey.

Those who are interested in organizing photoplay clubs or in teaching motion-picture appreciation as well as members of better films committees wishing to study the elements which combine to make up cinema appreciation, will welcome this new 72-page course of study. It has been produced through the cooperation of the Finer Films Federation of New Jersey, a group of civic minded citizens who believe that the youth of their community should be given an opportunity to develop sound judgment and good taste in their selection of films. The authors are well qualified to present their subject. They refer to Edgar Dale's "How to Appreciate Motion Pictures," Sarah McLean Mullen's "How to Judge Motion Pictures," William Lewin's "Photoplay Appreciation in American High Schools" and Elizabeth Watson Pollard's "Teaching Motion Picture Appreciation" as sources of many helpful suggestions. These writers have been pioneers in this line of study.

The course is divided into 12 units: *An introduction to present the purpose of the course, History of the industry, Motion picture vocabulary, Story—its requirements, adaptation, sources, etc., Types of pictures, Acting, Direction, Sets, Sound and music, Photography, Seeing a motion picture—to learn how to get the greatest enjoyment,* and *The value of motion pictures from a social standpoint,* taking up not only feature films but also the different types of short subjects which go to make up a balanced theatre bill. Each unit seems very fully covered, and suggestions are given for allotment of time for each unit depending upon the amount of time available for the study. An excellent bibliography is appended. It closes with a discussion of the newer developments in color and third dimension and the longer productions which compete with the legitimate theatres and which are an attempt on the part of intelligent producers to prevent double bills.

THE EDITORS.

This pamphlet is available through Educational and Recreational Guides, Inc., 125 Lincoln Ave., Newark, N. J. Single copies 50c with lower rates when purchased in larger quantities.

FEATURE FILMS

AND SUDDEN DEATH » »

Randolph Scott, Frances Drake, Tom Brown. From a story by Theodore and Madeleine Ruthven. Direction by Charles Barton. Paramount.

Taking advantage in its title of the widely read article of the same name, this film presents the tragic consequences of reckless driving. The lesson, to make it more palatable to movie audiences, is sugar-coated with a love story, and the ethical value is somewhat vitiated by the fact that the leading lady is played up as a heroine when she shields her brother from just punishment. However, since any attempt to correct the existing evils of bad driving is worth while, the film may be commended for its purpose.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes **Children, 8 to 12** No

THE ARIZONA RAIDERS » »

Larry Crabbe, Raymond Hatton, Marsha Hunt. From a novel by Zane Grey. Direction by James Hogan. Paramount.

About all that one can say of this picture is that it is a western with the usual scenery, shooting and skilled riding. The hero thwarts a gang of horse thieves and wins the girl. Raymond Hatton clowns continuously, adding slapstick comedy but detracting from the reality of the story.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes **Children, 8 to 12** Exciting

BENGAL TIGER » »

Barton MacLane, June Travis, Warren Hull, Paul Graetz. Directed by Louis King. Warner Bros.

There is very little excuse for this picture. It is a series of hair-raising scenes of a wild animal tamer in the cage with a particularly sullen and ugly tiger. In several instances we are shown altogether too realistic photographs of men being mutilated by enraged beasts. A triangle love story serves as plot, and jealousy on the part of the husband is the motive for the worst scene of all when a man is knocked unconscious and thrown into the cage to be finished off by the tiger. Oh entertainment! how many crimes are committed in thy name!

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Horrible **Children, 8 to 12** Absolutely impossible

THE BRIDE WALKS OUT » »

Barbara Stanwyck, Gene Raymond, Robert Young, Ned Sparks, Helen Broderick. Original story by Howard Emmett Rogers. Direction by Leigh Jason. R.K.O.

From the well-worn files comes this plot of a young dress model, earning fifty dollars a week, who marries a struggling engineer with the firm determination that the pair shall live on thirty-five a week. Whatever sympathy may be aroused for the bride ebbs away when she buys an expensive negligee at the moment their cherished furniture is about to be repossessed and accumulated grocery bills hang heavy over their heads. Most of the humor, if such it may be called, is supplied by a repulsive-looking furniture-agent and a series of dizzy drunken scenes in which the bride, her millionaire admirer and even the firm-minded husband participate at frequent intervals. Ned Sparks and Helen Broderick, entered to supply more comedy, are ineffectual in raising the entertainment value to an acceptable level.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Poor **Children, 8 to 12** Obviously no

THE CRIME OF DR. FORBES » »

Gloria Stuart, Robert Kent, Henry Armetta, J. Edward Bromberg, Sara Haden, Alan Dinehart. Original play by Frances Hyland and Saul Elkins. Direction by George Marshall. Twentieth Century-Fox.

Some years ago Edith Wharton wrote a very strong novel about a nurse who gave her hopelessly injured patient an overdose of a drug and was forever haunted by the fear that she might have done it because of her love for the patient's husband. This drama begins with the same theme under the more modern appellation of "mercy-killing," and one feels somewhat cheated at the end when one finds it is nothing of the sort but on the contrary an adroit suicide. The leading parts are sincere and well sustained. The characters behave as real people, worthy of one's admiration in meeting a crisis in their lives. However, the interspersion of a number of scenes of comedy with raucous laughter and tiresome jokes makes it a little difficult to readjust oneself to the moments of tragic importance. It is one of those pictures which have some excellent points but are not well-balanced productions.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No **Children, 8 to 12** No

DOWN THE STRETCH » »

Mickey Rooney, Patricia Ellis, William Best. Story and Screen play by William Jacobs. Direction by William Clemens. First National-Warner Bros.

Mickey Rooney is well cast in the role of a jockey whose life is complicated by the unsavory racing record of his deceased father. The story is well motivated and the racing scenes are exciting and nicely

photographed. The ending leaves the audience sympathetic but a little doubtful of the ethics involved, a problem which might well offer opportunity for discussion among students evaluating the social value of pictures. It is an unpretentious, entertaining film offering spontaneous laughs due to the amusing character of *Noah,* played by William Best.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining — **Children, 8 to 12** Yes

▼

EARLY TO BED » »

Charlie Ruggles, Mary Boland, George Barbier, Gail Patrick, Robert McWade. Play by Lucien Littlefield and Chandler Sprague. Direction by Norman McLeod. Paramount.

This is capital fun. Charlie Ruggles and Mary Boland always offer good comedy, and this is a film which provides a number of ridiculous situations and has an ingenious murder mystery thrown in for good measure. It seems that *Chester,* employee in a glass eye factory, has evaded matrimony for twenty years to *Tessie's* great distress. When at length they are united at her insistance, his secret "affliction" manifests itself in such a startling manner that a whole sanitarium is thrown into uproar. In the end his malady proves a blessing and enables him to become a hero. Many lines provoke laughter, the entire cast joins whole-heartedly in the action, and there is never a dull moment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Amusing — **Children, 8 to 12** Probably mature

▼

EARTHWORM TRACTORS » »

Joe E. Brown, June Travis, Guy Kibbee, Dick Foran, Carol Hughes. From the stories by William Hazlett Upson. Direction by Raymond Enright. First National.

Here comes the rollicking story of *Alexander Botts,* determined to sell the largest thing he can to win his truelove's favor. Joe E. Brown is a happy choice as the boastful, blundering "born salesman" who gets into outrageous difficulties, driving his tractor over a bottomless swamp, attaching it to a house which he moves across the town, and traversing a mountain road while charges of dynamite are detonated on every side. For an hour of fun, relaxation and unabashed laughter try "Earthworn Tractors."

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good — **Children, 8 to 12** Good

▼

EDUCATING FATHER » »

Jed Prouty, Shirley Deane, Dixie Dunbar. Original screen play by Katharine Kavanaugh, Edward T. Lowe and John Patrick. Direction by James Tinling. Twentieth Century-Fox.

Here is light, wholesome comedy with plenty of suspense and good acting. The *Joneses* are just an average normal American family of moderate means whose pride in each other is hidden by the usual squabbling and bickering among the younger members. *Mr. Jones'* ambition for his son who has just graduated from high school is not at all to the son's liking. The youth's stubborn resistance is broken down only after an exciting and entertaining sequence which should please family audiences.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good — **Children, 8 to 12** Entertaining

▼

GIRL OF THE OZARKS » »

Virginia Weidler, Henrietta Crosman, Leif Erikson, Elizabeth Russell. Based on a story by Maurine Babb, John Bright and Robert Tasker. Direction by William Shea. Paramount.

This picture is a heart-rending, realistic character study of a little backwoods girl. Misunderstood and cruelly treated, she triumphs over adversity and wins happiness through her staunch spirit. Virginia Weidler as *Edie,* the girl, and Henrietta Crosman as her old *Granny* give most sympathetic performances and are well supported by the other members of the cast in the roles of the diverse mountain village characters. The picture's weakness is that it is too consistently depressing. Though we are trained by current literature to associate tragedy with the people of this locale, the introduction of a lighter note would be welcome.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Possible — **Children, 8 to 12** Too emotional and depressing

▼

HEARTS DIVIDED » »

Marion Davies, Dick Powell, Claude Rains, Charlie Ruggles, Edward Everett Horton, Arthur Treacher. From the play "Glorious Betsy," by Rida Johnson Young. Direction Frank Borzage. Cosmopolitan-First Nat'l.

This had all the makings of a most entertaining picture but it did not realize its possibilities. In spite of Claude Rains, who presents a vital clear-cut interpretation of his role of Napoleon Bonaparte, the production is second rate. This is due in part to the ineptitude of Miss Davies and Mr. Powell in their romantic roles, and in part to an inadequate scenario. The lovely photography and rich costumes please the eye, but the mind is left unsatisfied. The plot is based on the unhappy love affair of young Jerome Bonaparte and the lovely Betsy Patterson of Baltimore.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Probably entertaining — **Children, 8 to 12** No interest

HIGH TENSION » »

Bryan Donlevy, Glenda Farrell, Norman Foster. Based on a story by J. Robert Bren and Norman Houston. Direction by Allan Dwan. Twentieth Century-Fox.

Steve, a quarrelsome and hard-drinking deep-sea diver, is sent to Honolulu to engage in the dangerous work of blasting a coral reef in order to lay an oceanic cable. When his pal is caught under the reef, *Steve* rescues him and becomes a hero. Little is made of the opportunity to show interesting scenes in connection with the laying of the cable, and the picture is almost entirely made up of episodes of *Steve's* fights and carousals and his love affair with a girl short-story writer. It has little to recommend it to any audience.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No — **Children, 8 to 12** No

HOT MONEY » »

Ross Alexander, Beverly Roberts, Joseph Cawthorn, Paul Graets. Screen play by William Jacobs. Direction by William McGann. Warner Bros.

The faith of an inventor influences an ex-convict to go straight and a racket becomes a legitimate business in this story of the development of a highly concentrated gasoline substitute. It is undoubtedly far-fetched, but there is sufficient originality in treatment to make it lightly entertaining.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fair — **Children, 8 to 12** No

IT'S LOVE AGAIN » »

Jessie Mathews, Sonnie Hale, Robert Young. Story by Marion Dix and Lesser Samuels. Direction by Victor Saville. Gaumont-British.

Jessie Mathews may always be counted on to sing charmingly and dance superbly and she is given many opportunities in this lively and amusing English musical comedy. She appears as a talented performer who cannot prove her abilities until she assumes the role of an imaginary lady from India who has been created to serve the needs of a society reporter in search of copy for his column. It is all gay and light and entertaining, daring in costuming, but on the whole pleasant family entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining — **Children, 8 to 12** Entertaining for many

M'LISS » »

Anne Shirley, John Beal, Guy Kibbee. From the book by Bret Harte. Screen play by Dorothy Yost. Direction by George Nicholls, Jr. R.K.O.

Whenever an old favorite is adapted for the screen there is likely to be a wide divergence of opinion as to its worth. This Bret Harte classic, popular thirty years ago both as a story and as a play, preserves in its screen appearance much of the flavor of the original but it is elaborated for the demands of the screen and the additional material is not always in good taste or up to the standard of the original. The setting is a frontier town in the West of pioneer days. *M'Liss,* the heroine, is a motherless young girl who with her drunken father is evicted from her home and finds herself friendless except for a saloon-keeper and the girls of the dance hall. These are typical Bret Harte characters, rough but kindly. Their relationship to the innocent girl and their efforts to protect her make a moving if somewhat melodramatic and sentimental story.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Passable — **Children, 8 to 12** No

NINE DAYS A QUEEN » »

Nova Philbeam, Desmond Tester, Sir Cedric Hardwick, John Mills, Felix Aylmer, Leslie Perrins, Given Ffrangcon-Davies, Sybil Thorndike. Author and director, Robert Stevenson. Gaumont-British.

With a fine effect of authenticity the tragic story of Lady Jane Grey, Queen of England for nine days, is unfolded with all the realism of an amazing period of intrigue and cruelty. After the death of Henry VIII his frail son Edward VI was crowned King. Because of his youth a Protector was necessary, and Edward Seymore outwitted other scheming lords to assume the position. His brother, realizing that the young King could not live long, played his cards to back another heir, choosing Lady Jane Grey as the most probably acceptable. The gentle unambitious girl was brought to London, and there followed months of intrigue around the helpless pawn of politics. Nova Philbeam, who is known to American audiences by her superlative acting in "Little Friend" and "The Man Who Knew Too Much," is excellent in the role of the hapless girl. She is lovely and simple and shows a real depth of understanding and ability. Lady Jane's short-lived romance is a lovely idyl in an otherwise tragic episode in history. Desmond Tester has much of the charm of Freddie Bartholomew and displays both regal dignity and childlike pathos as the unfortunate boy who wishes to be a just and sympathetic king. The picture is exceptionally well acted throughout by a British cast, and production values are good. It provides interesting entertainment and gives new life to the pages of history.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent — **Children, 8 to 12** Mature

PALM SPRINGS » »

Frances Langford, Sir Guy Standing, Ernest Cossart, David Niven, Smith Ballew, Spring Byington, E. E. Clive, Sterling Holloway. From a story by Myles Connolly. Direction by Aubrey Scotto. A Walter Wanger Production. Paramount.

According to this picture Palm Springs consists of one hotel, one gambling resort and a flock of cowboys from Wyoming entirely surrounded by Joshua trees. The romance is slightly unsatisfactory, since the blue-blooded heroine is enamored of a rangy youth with a plethora of "aint's" and one stock joke about a rattlesnake. Those in lesser roles contribute the best acting: Sir Guy Standing as the scapegrace Earl, Ernest Cossart as his valet, E. E. Clive as the visiting explorer, David Niven as the young man tied to his aunt's apron strings and Spring Byington, the suspicious aunt are all well cast in excellent parts. Frances Langford sings with feeling, and the songs have melody and rhythm. There are enough good points to make "Palm Springs" worth seeing, but it does not rank as a topnotch musical.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes

Children, 8 to 12 Little interest

PAROLE » »

Henry Hunter, Ann Preston, Alan Dinehart, Noah Beery, Jr., Grant Mitchell, Bernadene Hayes. Direction by Louis Landers. Universal.

The inside workings of parole boards, the part played by crooked politics in obtaining pardons and the difficulties that confront ex-convicts when they try to rehabilitate themselves are told in this involved, melodramatic and somewhat improbable picture. As an indictment of the parole system it warrants attention but from the standpoint of an audience seeking entertainment it is too unpleasant to be recommended.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No; too tragic and violent

Children, 8 to 12 No

POOR LITTLE RICH GIRL » »

Shirley Temple, Alice Faye, Gloria Stuart, Jack Haley, Claude Gillingwater, Henry Armetta. Suggested by stories by Eleanor Gates and Ralph Spencer. Screen play by Sam Hellman, Gladys Lehman and Harry Tugend. Direction by Irving Cummings. Twentieth Century-Fox.

With little resemblance to the original story from which the title has been taken, this is only a vehicle to display the talents and versatility of Shirley Temple. Rather than a dramatic setting, it is a series of vaudeville turns in which the little girl is as usual, the star, and it unfortunately gives her little opportunity to act. It tells the implausible story of a motherless child from a very wealthy home surrounded by luxury. She is sent away to school to find companions of her own age, but because of an accident to her nurse, she does not reach the school and decides to run away. Fortunately no harm comes to her, but the ever-present menace of a kidnaper may make the film less popular with many families than other recent Shirley Temple releases.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Probably very entertaining

Children, 8 to 12 Doubtful; depends on child

POPPY » »

W. C. Fields, Rochelle Hudson, Richard Cromwell. Based on a play by Dorothy Donnelly. Direction by A. Edward Sutherland. Paramount.

Those to whom W. C. Fields' characterizations appeal will like this picture. In it Fields displays all of his usual tricks without the expected number of off-color jokes. He plays the role of a skalawag who joins a carnival troupe and by all sorts of questionable schemes picks up a living for himself and his lovely daughter. The picture ends when his most ambitious swindle unexpectedly nets a fortune and a happy marriage for the girl. Rochelle Hudson as the daughter is charming. The supporting cast is good.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12 No interest

PUBLIC ENEMY'S WIFE » »

Pat O'Brien, Margaret Lindsay, Gene Armstrong, Cesar Romero. From a story by P. J. Wolfson. Screen play by Abem Finkel and Harold Buckley. Direction by Nick Grinde. Warner Bros.

Again the overworked G-men are used to entertain crime-loving audiences and their role is both undignified and absurd. The story also is improbable and too highly plotted to interest anyone of discriminating taste. The opening scenes show the wife of a jewel thief about to be released from prison after serving three years as her husband's accomplice. He is in for life but we are shown that he has promised to "get" any man who tries to win her away from him. In the next scene we learn that the wife, inexplicably admitted to good society, has secured a divorce from her convict husband and is about to contract a marriage with a wealthy polo player. On the day that her engagement is announced the ex-husband escapes from prison and the pursuit begins. G-men are summoned. Then follow plots and counter-plots against the "honeymooning" couple, with the customary shooting affrays and burning automobiles. Though in the end the convict is of course vanquished the picture is trashy and banal.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Banal and in bad taste

Children, 8 to 12 No

THE PRINCESS COMES ACROSS » »

Carole Lombard, Fred MacMurray, Alison Skipworth, Douglass Dumbrille. Adapted from a novel by Louis Lucien Rogger. Direction by William K. Howard. Paramount.

Despite its implausibility and mechanical plot this picture will make a diverting evening for the audience in search of light entertainment. Granted an impossible situation, the story moves along swiftly, attended by amusing dialogue and characterization. A down-and-out actress takes passage for New York on a first class liner under the assumed name "Princess Olga of Sweden," hoping in this way to gain sufficient prestige to win a theatrical contract in America. Across her path are thrown a young orchestra leader, a blackmailer and a quintet of foreign detectives. These are more than enough to afford plot complications for the "Princess" and her clever woman companion. The theme is light and farcical but it maintains suspense admirably and is saved from banality by the acting of Carole Lombard and Alison Skipworth.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12
With family groups

SAN FRANCISCO » »

Clark Gable, Jeanette MacDonald, Spencer Tracy, Jack Holt, Jessie Ralph, Ted Healy. Story by Robert Hopkins. Screen play by Anita Loos. Direction by W. S. Van Dyke. M-G-M.

Earthquakes may have been shown before in movies, but never with such thrilling reality as in this picture. It is really an immense spectacle, a great technical achievement. The film is excellent melodrama. It tells a story of the rowdy, colorful Barbary Coast with characters clearly drawn and well developed. Clark Gable as *Blackie,* the proprietor of the notorious Paradise Cafe, enters politics and combats the vigorous and active opposition of the wealthy Nob Hill owners of the property who do not want reforms in the building regulations and fire ordinances. To the Paradise comes a young singer who has aspired to the operatic stage of the Tivoli, but who must work to live. She becomes the cause of further rivalry between the cafe owner and an aristocrat. The entire cast is excellent. Clark Gable fills the role of *Blackie* admirably. Miss MacDonald gives a fine performance making her part more than the sentimentally pretty girl whom no evil can touch. Her beautiful voice is displayed in a wide variety of selections. Spencer Tracy cleverly portrays a priest, and Jessie Ralph is notable as the *grande dame* who originally came to San Francisco to take in washing. It is all made believable and leaves a vivid though sensational impression of the period and the appalling holocaust from the ashes of which arose the new San Francisco.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Strong but interesting

Children, 8 to 12
Too exciting

THREE ON THE TRAIL » »

William Boyd, Jimmy Ellison, Muriel Evans, George Hayes. From a book by Clarence E. Mulford. Direction by Howard Brotherton. Paramount.

Hopalong Cassidy and his two pals, cowboys of the Bar-Twenty Ranch, thwart the wicked cattle-rustling keeper of the saloon, *Pecos Kane,* and his henchman the sheriff. The rugged battlements of the High Sierras make a beautiful background, while swift riding over the range, high excitement and a dash of romance fill the main specifications for a Western picture. It is not the best of the *Hopalong Cassidy* series, but those who have enjoyed the others will doubtlessly be pleased by this.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Good

Children, 8 to 12
Too exciting

THREE WISE GUYS » »

Robert Young, Betty Furness, Raymond Walburn, Thurston Hall, Bruce Cabot. From the play by Damon Runyon. Screen play by Elmer Harris. Direction by George B. Seitz. M-G-M.

How a young wastrel is reclaimed through his marriage to a girl who was formerly the decoy for a gang of crooks is the subject matter of this trivial comedy. It is well directed and moves at a lively clip with some amusing situations and fairly entertaining dialogue, but if you miss it you need not repine.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
No value; subject matter not recommended

Children, 8 to 12
No

TRAILIN' WEST » »

Dick Foran, Paula Stone, Gordon Elliott, Addison Richards. Original by Anthony Coldeway. Direction by Noel Smith. Warner Bros.

If the average Western has advanced a step at a time, this picture takes two steps backward. From the beginning, when national figures move and speak like puppets, it is often stilted and exaggerated; scenes which are meant to be serious are often as funny as "The Drunkard," and one episode is in the manner of the old-time serial. The story covers events during the Civil War, when shipments of gold were being intercepted by outlaws. Dick Foran, who has a good voice and a pleasing personality, deserves a better opportunity, and Miss Stone might be suitable with careful direction. To be sure there are good views of mountainous country and

daring horsemanship, but roistering saloon scenes and gambling make it questionable for juniors, although they constitute the class which would overlook the weak points of the film.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Poor **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

WE ARE FROM KRONSTADT » »

Russian film directed by Dzigan.

This film concerns the part played by the sailors of Kronstadt in the seige of Petrograd by the Whites in October, 1919. It is a war picture with surprisingly few brutal scenes or individual acts of heroism, but all the more intense because of the human plane on which it is kept. Accustomed as we are to having our heroes protected to the end of a picture, we resent the wholesale murder at the close, but, to the Russians, men do not count as individuals. The tragedy is relieved with some delightful humor and there are a few beautiful scenic compositions but other shots, especially closeups, are poor. The film as a whole is an excellent one, at times reaching great heights, often giving us bits of very fine acting and never falling to mediocrity.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Depends on taste **Children, 8 to 12** No interest

▼

WE WENT TO COLLEGE » »

Charles Butterworth, Walter Abel, Hugh Herbert, Una Merkel, Edith Atwater, Walter Catlett. Story by George Oppenheimer and Finley Peter Dunne, Jr. Screen play by Richard Maibaum and Maurice Rapf.

In the opening scenes of this picture we see the typical preparations of a University for its annual "Home-Coming Week." The program chairman, a pompous but lovable character of the Babbitt type, the favorite professor of the campus, plays host to the incoming alumni with exuberant geniality. In the successive scenes fun is provided by the always ludicrous attempts of middle-aged men and women to recreate "the good old days." There is only a slender thread of story but no more is needed on which to string the amusing incidents of "Alumni Week." Those who have ever attended one of these reunions will live again their sensations of pleasure or boredom and those who haven't will be afforded a close-up of what they have missed.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Probably acceptable **Children, 8 to 12** No interest

▼

WOMEN ARE TROUBLE » »

Stuart Erwin, Paul Kelly, Florence Rice, Margaret Irving. From the story by George Harmon Coxe. Direction by Erroll Taggart. M-G-M.

Once again the unwelcome woman reporter clears up a crime situation and wins her place in the sun, including two proposals of marriage. While this is frankly a program picture, various episodes are treated with originality, and the dialogue is natural and often humorous. Stuart Erwin, Paul Kelly and Florence Rice give creditable performances. The gangsters are allotted a liberal amount of footage and one scene in particular might prove terrifying to children.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Passable **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

SHORT SUBJECTS

CHANGING OF THE GUARD. Vitaphone Technicolor. Story by Sig Herzig. Direction by Bobby Connolly. The colorful plaids of the Scotch Clans are particularly effective in this short story of an old man (Halliwell Hobbes) who describes to his small granddaughter (Sibyl Jason) all the details of his last night with his regiment. A beautiful and educational film.

THE SONG OF A NATION. Vitaphone Technicolor. Donald Woods, Claire Dodd. Play by Forrest Barnes. Direction by Forrest Barnes. A story woven around the composition of the Star-Spangled Banner is done in a charming manner which should be an inspiration to every American. The storm and night of battle are highly effective in the new Technicolor.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent **Children, 8 to 12** Excellent

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THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

AUGUST 1936

For practical use we suggest filing bulletins where they may be easily accessible for reference. Films are not released simultaneously over the country. You will need these reviews for constant reference.

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*Three Cheers For Love
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Yours For The Asking

***Film suitable for family entertainment but not necessarily appropriate for children under 12 or for children unaccompanied by adults.**

THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB
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MOTION • PICTURE • REVIEWS

Published monthly by

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Vol. X **AUGUST, 1936** **No. 2**

BOOK REVIEW

A Motion Picture Version of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet," the Play and the Complete Screen Script. Published by Random House, Inc. (20 E. 57th St., N. Y.) in collaboration with M-G-M. Price $2.00.

This volume should be of interest to anyone anticipating seeing M-G-M's "Romeo and Juliet" and of value to schools and photoplay clubs. It contains the original Shakespearean text of the play (from the first folio) and the scenario version, accompanied by comments on the production by the stars, Norma Shearer, Leslie Howard, and John Barrymore, and the producer, Irving Thalberg. It also contains short articles on the technical problems involved, written by George Cukor, the director, Talbot Jennings, scenarist, Professor Talbot Jennings, Jr., literary advisor, Adrian and Oliver Messel, fashion designers, and Cedric Gibbons who arranged the sets and background.

Possibly only students of Shakespeare's writings realize that all of his plays are shortened from the originals for the stage, and few know of the different versions which have been presented during the past 300 years. There has been even a happy ending for "Romeo and Juliet." But in adapting the play for the screen no liberties were taken. Every line spoken is Shakespeare's. Some scenes usually omitted are restored while some narrative has been converted into pantomime and action. A few scenes are left out to prevent unnecessary repetition, for from the screen, every word may be heard by the audience. All vital dialogue has been preserved. Reading both versions is an interesting object lesson in adapting stage plays for screen material.

The picture aims at historical and scenic accuracy, and the unlimited resources of the screen make possible the recreation of all the luxury and magnificence of the Renaissance. These settings on the screen offer the greatest novelty and freshness of the production. Backgrounds and costumes of the 15th century, with local color of action, have been reproduced from old masters and should illuminate the story in a way never before realized. The book points out the sources from which these have been drawn and could be a suggestion for further research for students interested. Illustrations of some of the originals from which the sets and costumes were taken would have been a great addition to the book but have been omitted in favor of photographs of those concerned with the production.

The book ends with a preliminary guide to the study and appreciation of the screen version prepared by Max J. Herzberg who comments on the plot and the history of its use through the course of time, the making of the photoplay, quoting from William J. Strunk, a chapter on learning Shakespeare's language, and a chapter on the musical effects. More space on the selections used in the musical background, the dances, and musical instruments of the period would have been of great interest. The publication is, however, an instructive introduction to a picture which cannot fail to be an important addition to exceptional photoplays being produced today.

L. O. V.

FEATURE FILMS

CHARLIE CHAN AT THE RACE TRACK »

Warner Oland, Keye Luke, Helen Wood, Alan Dinehart. Based on the character created by Earl Derr Biggers. Direction by H. Bruce Humberstone. Twentieth Century-Fox.

Charlie Chan and his son attempt to solve the mystery of a murder which occurred on shipboard and succeed in exposing a race track gambling racket. Keye Luke as the son has become an important member of the family and adds an able and amusing characterization to the series. The filming of the Santa Anita Handicap (here called Santa Juanita) is very thrilling and there are a number of good scenes, although the plot is so complicated that it is a little hard to follow. There are, of course, the qualities one expects in a Chan film: suspense, instructive details and the sagely humorous comments for which the Chinese detective is famous.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes — **Children, 8 to 12** Mature

THE DEVIL DOLL » »

Lionel Barrymore, Maureen O'Sullivan, Frank Lawton, Rafaela Ottiano, Claire du Brey. Based on the novel "Burn Witch Burn" by Abraham Merritt. Direction by Tod Browning. M-G-M.

This story, based on a fantastic figment of the imagination, reveals a laboratory wherein animals and human beings are reduced to a small fraction of their original size, bereft of will-power and sent forth at the command of a scientist and his assistant to inflict revenge on three evil-doers. Revenge is not a pleasant theme, however justice may be served, but the chief interest in this film lies in the elaboration of a novel idea, effected by clever direction, trick photography and realistic interpretations by the actors, particularly Lionel Barrymore, Claire du Brey and Rafaela Ottiano.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No — **Children, 8 to 12** No

DON'T GAMBLE WITH LOVE » »

Ann Sothern, Bruce Cabot. Direction by Dudley Murphy. Columbia.

The appeal of this picture is due to the personalities of the actors, beautiful clothes and luxurious sets. A charming well-bred young couple, wholesomely and delightfully in love, run a high class, strictly honest gambling salon. Presently the wife decides that the atmosphere is not one in which to bring up their baby, not because the gambling is demoralizing but because it is a social disadvantage to be on the croupier's side of the table. They therefore sell out and attempt to invest in a gentlemanly business, but when they find there are crooks on "both sides of the table" life becomes very complicated for them and it takes a good deal of film footage to get it running smoothly again. The really beautiful relationship between husband and wife gives a quality of homely virtue which seems oddly incongruous with their occupation.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No — **Children, 8 to 12** No

DUBROVSKY » »

E. Samarin-Elsky, N. Monakhov. Founded on the novel by Alexander Pushkin. Directed by A. V. Ivanovsky. Amkino.

This production is a wild and stirring tale of Czarist Russia. The elder *Dubrovsky* is a wealthy land owner, and is stripped of his possessions by the political influence of neighbors. Strangely, the serfs on the *Dubrovsky* estate remain loyal to their master and are particularly faithful to the son, *Vladimir.* The family is soon ousted, and *Vladimir* is deprived of his wealth and position and so loses his opportunity to marry the daughter of one of the nobles who has participated in the seizure of the estate. The young *Dubrovsky* finally becomes a sort of Russian Robin Hood, with the faithful serfs as a valiant band of followers. The plot develops with much fighting, house burning, and many interesting scenes of old Russian life. Finally *Dubrovsky's* loved one is forcibly married to one of the nobles of the Czar's court, and the young Robin Hood is outlawed and slain with his entire band. The picture is of interest to adults as a portrayal of Russian life under the Czars. Its setting is of a period before the revolution, so the usual propaganda is lacking. The English titles are hardly adequate to give a clear idea of the plot. The photography is good and the direction excellent.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 If interested — **Children, 8 to 12** No interest

GIRL'S DORMITORY » »

Herbert Marshall, Ruth Chatterton, Simone Simon. Direction by Irving Cummings. From a play by Ladislaus Fedor. Screen play by Gene Markey. Twentieth Century-Fox.

Deft and understanding direction and a gifted cast again prove their importance in the making of a distinguished photoplay, and a story that might easily have been ordinary is lifted to superior heights by the artistry with which it is handled. The plot is extremely simple. *Marie,* a French school girl in Germany, naively loves the director of the school, a man eighteen years older than she. *Professor Anna,* of fine character and

personal charm, also loves the director. When lack of information and understanding on the part of another teacher almost ruins *Marie's* life, the audience perceives that a blundering adult may do great wrong through failure to comprehend the innocence of youth. Simone Simon as *Marie,* Ruth Chatterton as *Professor Anna,* and Herbert Marshall as the director are ideally cast.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Mature **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

GIVE ME YOUR HEART » »

Kay Francis, George Brent, Roland Young, Frieda Inescort. From the play "Sweet Aloes" by Jay Mallory. Direction by Archie L. Mayo. Warner Bros. (A Cosmopolitan Production.)

Don't be mislead; this is not a musical comedy as the name suggests but a fairly heavy problem drama concerning a lovely young girl, *Belinda,* who bears an illegitimate son and relinquishes him to his father (listed in the peerage) who is blessed with an altruistic wife. If you are not too particular about motives or morals it is a good production of its kind. Roland Young's delicious comedy is worth the price of admission, lifting the plot from the leaden depths of depression where it might easily have found its level. Sophisticated? Yes, but all quite charming. Perfect backdrops, soft lighting, mellifluous voices, admirable cast. If you are inclined to be a cynic, you may ask why a dozen people should know the heroine's wayward past, while the man she eventually marries should know nothing, give her countless luxuries and receive the brunt of all her tantrums and grievances against the world.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Obviously not **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

GRAND JURY » »

Frank M. Thomas, Fred Stone, Owen Davis, Jr., Louise Latimer, Moroni Olsen. Direction by Albert S. Rogell. R.K.O.

This melodrama has the idea behind it of showing up the laxness of some grand jury investigations. Fred Stone is cast as a comical, blundering person who sets out to unravel various clues which have been neglected by the jury. He happens upon vital information about a band of racketeers and turns up some excellent copy for his son-in-law's newspaper. There are plenty of exciting action scenes, and throughout the picture a strain of homespun humor is provided by Fred Stone. The production is fair entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Passable **Children, 8 to 12** No

THE KING STEPS OUT » »

Franchot Tone, Grace Moore, Walter Connolly, Herman Bing. Direction by Joseph Von Sternberg. Columbia.

Fritz Kreisler's operetta "Cissy" furnishes the music for this romantic trifle in which Grace Moore as an engagingly wayward young lady of royal blood assists her cousin, the King, to lay aside his dignity and indulge in an amusing adventure. It is pleasantly diverting.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining **Children, 8 to 12** Yes

▼

MARY OF SCOTLAND » »

Katherine Hepburn, Fredric March, Florence Eldridge, Douglas Walton, John Carradine, Robert Barrat, Gavin Muir, Ian Keith, Moroni Olsen, Ralph Forbes, Alan Mowbray, Frieda Inescort, Donald Crisp, David Torrence. Directed by John Ford. Screen play by Dudley Nichols. Based on the play by Maxwell Anderson. Produced by Pandro S. Berman. R.K.O.

Maxwell Anderson, who wrote the stage play upon which this film was based used as his theme the personal conflict between two women, *Elizabeth* and *Mary, Elizabeth's* jealousy of *Mary's* youth and charm as well as her fear of *Mary's* pretentions to the throne of England. The film closely parallels the play. It is not an historical pageant nor even historically accurate, but it gives a vivid, romantic picture of the tragic young queen of Scotland who came to Holyrood Castle with the courageous hope of uniting the factions of her country and, because of her religion and *Elizabeth's* enmity, was betrayed by her own councilors. Katherine Hepburn plays the role of *Mary* with vitality and charm, and, while she is not the conventional conception of the character, she creates a memorable portrait. Florence Eldridge is equally impressive as *Elizabeth,* and Fredric March is a romantic *Bothwell.* Costumes, settings and musical background, especially the wailing of the bagpipes, are most effective.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Interesting **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

MISTER CINDERELLA » »

Jack Haley, Betty Furness, Arthur Treacher, Raymond Walburn. Directed by Edward Sedgwick. Original story by Jack Jevne. Hal Roach Studios.

Perhaps slap-stick is coming back into popularity. Certainly Jack Haley as an extremely silly barber impersonating a millionaire, seems to appeal to a number of men in the audiences. He looses his bathing trunks on a nail in the float, dressed in sea weed he is chased by a pack of dogs, again his clippers shave a path through an unsuspecting customer's hair. Certainly not subtle, but fast enough moving, and to many, sufficiently

hilarious to be heralded by professional critics as a "movie natural." Others, like ourselves, may be painfully bored.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 A matter of taste
Children, 8 to 12 A matter of taste

MY AMERICAN WIFE » »

Francis Lederer, Ann Sothern, Fred Stone, Billie Burke, Ernest Cossart, Grant Mitchell, Hal K. Dawson, Helene Millard, Adrian Morris, Dora Clemant, Montague Shaw. Direction by Harold Young. Paramount.

The often used but generally entertaining story of the American girl who marries a foreign title. This one has a new element inasmuch as the young people really love each other although the bride's mother seems to have arranged the marriage for the sole purpose of impressing the townsfolk of Smelter City. The motivating force of the story is the young nobleman's struggle to become a democratic American with the assistance of the bride's rough western grandfather but against considerable opposition from the bride and the rest of her family who want to live up to the count's European background. While periodic visits to *One-Eyed Joe's* saloon seem to constitute a rather large portion of the young man's effort to be an American, the appealing naivete of Francis Lederer keeps the picture in its proper light comedy vein throughout.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining
Children, 8 to 12 Probably not interesting

MY MAN GODFREY » »

William Powell, Carole Lombard, Alice Brady, Eugene Pallette, Mischa Auer, Gail Patrick. Screen play by Erich Hatch and Morrie Ryskind. Direction by Gregory La Cava. Universal.

Finding the suave and usually immaculate William Powell in the role of a "forgotten man" living on a city dump is the first surprise in this ingenious and highly amusing farce. From the dump, the gentleman rises to a position of butler in a household which is best described by the second maid as "a bit daft." The lines and situations are hilariously funny and story and treatment quite original. The cast, too, is exceptionally good and direction expert. It is genuinely entertaining. Mixed with the satirical humor is a bit of philosophy of living.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining
Children, 8 to 12 Mature

PEPPER » »

Jane Withers, Irvin S. Cobb, Slim Summerville. Direction by James Tinling. Twentieth Century-Fox.

As in "Ginger" Jane Withers plays the role of the hoydenish, irrepressible, *enfant terrible* who gains a worthy end through clamor and mischief and the ability to worm her way into the affections of a crochety millionaire. The action is similar to the antics of "Our Gang," and the plot is as unreal. There is little danger that the picture will be taken seriously even by the child audiences for whom it is obviously designed. On the other hand it will probably be vastly entertaining to them for Jane Withers is unexcelled in her field. She puts interfering elders in their places, aids the under-dog, exposes an imposter and leads a whooping gang of neighborhood children to triumphant victory against all the traditional enemies of childhood.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining
Children, 8 to 12 Yes

THE RETURN OF SOPHIE LANG » »

Gertrude Michael, Sir Guy Standing, Ray Milland, Elizabeth Patterson. Direction by George Archainbaud. Paramount.

Crook melodrama beautifully photographed and suavely played by a uniformly excellent cast. The beautiful *Sophie Lang,* international jewel thief, appears on board a transatlantic liner as companion to *Araminta Sedley* who is bringing the Kruger diamond to America. On board is one *Max Bernard,* former associate of the now reformed *Sophie,* and also the inevitable newspaper man to supply heart interest. Considerable suspense is occasioned by the disappearance of the diamond en route although at no time is there any doubt—except in the minds of the police—as to who has the jewel. The real story lies in the clever way in which *Sophie Lang,* with the aid of the young reporter, outwits the gang of jewel thieves and justifies *Mrs. Sedley's* continued trust in her.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Doubtful
Children, 8 to 12 No

ROMEO AND JULIET » »

Norma Shearer, Leslie Howard, John Barrymore, Edna May Oliver, Basil Rathbone. From the play by William Shakespeare. Directed by George Cukor. M-G-M.

"Romeo and Juliet" may be commended highly for its beauty and its dignity. In adapting it to a medium for which it was not written the producers were subjected to a crucial test, and they have met the difficulties admirably. The beautiful settings and interesting stage business do not obscure the text of the play but invest the performance with a real life quality sometimes lacking in legitimate drama, and the lines become passionate utterances of human hearts rather than lyric poetry alone. Miss Shearer's *Juliet* is very fine, and her physical loveliness has never been more evident. She gives the role a youthful, spiritual quality which is exquisite. Her rendition of the balcony scene will certainly stand comparison with great performances on the stage while the intimate possibilities of the screen enhance its beauty. Although

Leslie Howard is not an ideal *Romeo,* for he never quite succeeds in banishing a certain self-consciousness, his reading of the lines is beautiful. Among others in the cast Henry Kolker adds great distinction as *Friar Lawrence* and the several scenes in his cell are especially realistic and moving. John Barrymore is not the conventional *Mercutio,* and yet he is perhaps more reminiscent of the traditional interpretation than the others. There are moments of rare beauty in his performance. The picture will offer a splendid opportunity to those who rarely see a fine stage production. It is a treat for eye and ear alike.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent **Children, 8 to 12** Long but excellent

▼

SECRET AGENT » »

Peter Lorre, Robert Young, John Geilgud, Madeleine Carrol. From a novel by Somerset Maughan. Direction by Alfred Hitchcock. Gaumont-British.

Somerset Maughan, having served in the British Secret Service during the World War, is well fitted to write an authentic story of espionage, and however melodramatic "Secret Agent" may be, we cannot view it unmoved or dismiss it as fiction for there is always the possibility that it might be true. This fact, combined with telling direction and the extremely sinister character played by Peter Lorre, makes "Secret Agent" an achievement in suspense. Whether or not it is enjoyable is a matter for debate. The scene is laid in Switzerland where the spy *Herein Aschenden* enlists the services of a beautiful blond and a person known as the "Hairless Mexican" to trail a German agent.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

SUSY » »

Jean Harlow, Franchot Tone, Cary Grant, Lewis Stone, Benita Hume. Direction by George Fitzmaurice. M-G-M.

A wartime melodrama featuring a spy plot, an aviation battle and several love affairs. Jean Harlow as *Susy* is a chorus girl stranded in London. She meets by chance a young Irishman whom she soon marries, but a beautiful lady spy enters the picture and there is some shooting after which *Susy* runs away thinking her husband has been killed. Improbable and melodramatic events follow but the plot is sufficiently intriguing to hold the audience to the finish. *Susy* is rather a colorless person compared to the vivid characters Miss Harlow usually plays. The role will add nothing to her fame as an actress.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Not recommended **Children, 8 to 12** No

SWORN ENEMY » »

Robert Young, Florence Rice, Joseph Calleia, Lewis Stone, Nat Pendleton. Based on a story by Richard Wormser. Screen play by Wells Root. Direction by Edwin L. Marin. M-G-M.

A young man, desperately in need of a job, finds one in a wholesale produce house. There he first feels the iron fist of the racketeers who prey on honest laborers. The story is a well written melodrama concerning the detection of the vicious, hidden leader of the gang, whose graft touches all business activities in the city. The action is fast and exciting, and the cast and direction excellent. The ending is perhaps too hysterical, but for its type, the picture is good entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Very emotional **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

36 HOURS TO KILL » »

Brian Donlevy, Gloria Stuart, Douglas Fowley, Isabel Jewel, Stepin Fetchit. Direction by Eugene Forde. Twentieth Century-Fox.

Public enemies and G-men aboard a transcontinental train furnish material for a routine thriller of crime versus law. Stepin Fetchit as a pullman porter humorously relieves the tension. Due to a capable cast, well maintained suspense and elements of mystery, the picture will probably be regarded by the general public as good entertainment of its kind. However, though the public enemy is killed in the end, audiences who question the social value of pictures dealing with crime and violence will deplore the clouding of the moral issue that arises when the gangster is conveniently murdered by his jealous wife, for while this may be retribution it is not justice.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Not recommended **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

TO MARY—WITH LOVE » »

Warner Baxter, Myrna Loy, Ian Hunter. Direction by John Cromwell. Screen play by Richard Sherman and Howard Ellis Smith. From the story by Richard Sherman. Twentieth Century-Fox.

The everyday life of a young married couple, from 1928 to the present, is shown in this film. While all of their experiences fortunately are not common to everybody, *Mary* and *Jock Wallace* are typical of a certain class of city dwellers who set up housekeeping in the heyday of prohibition and booming business and very nearly wrecked their homes through the social and economic excesses of the period. The picture is interesting in spite of its lack of novelty because it is sincerely and plausibly presented. The acting is natural and convincing, the characters are

worthwhile people and the problems involved touch upon experiences we have encountered at least in our neighbors' homes if not in our own. News-reel shots of important public happenings are cleverly introduced to give the feeling of the times.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too mature **Children, 8 to 12** No

▼

THREE CHEERS FOR LOVE » »

Eleanore Whitney, Robert Cummings, William Frawley, Elizabeth Patterson, Roscoe Karns, John Halliday. Based on a story by George Marion, Jr. Direction by Ray McCarey. Paramount.

The daughter of a Hollywood producer is sent to an Eastern finishing school to acquire culture, but as Fate will have it, the school, on the verge of bankruptcy, has become the rendezvous for a theatrical troupe. This gives Eleanore Whitney as *Skippy* an excellent chance to demonstrate her dancing ability and to join in a number of haphazard and implausible situations. It is very light, moderately entertaining musi-comedy.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes **Children, 8 to 12** Mature

▼

WHITE FANG » »

Michael Whalen, Joan Muir, Slim Summerville, Charles Winninger. From the story by Jack London. Direction by David Butler. Twentieth Century-Fox.

"White Fang" is better than average entertainment for those who like their men rough and strong, the country wild and the dogs wilder. The story is cut to pattern, and yet it does hold interest even when the audience can easily figure out what is going to happen next. There is a feeling of infinite distance, intense cold. The dog does remarkable work and is, of course, an important member of the cast. Slim Summerville adds a good touch of comedy and pathos; the other actors are adequate. As far as children are concerned, it would be a far better picture without the chronically inebriated doctor.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes **Children, 8 to 12** Passable

▼

YOURS FOR THE ASKING » »

George Raft, Dolores Costello Barrymore, Ida Lupino, Reginald Owen, James Gleason, Edgar Kennedy, Lynn Overman, Richard Powell. Direction by Alexander Hall. Paramount.

Here is sheer comedy with no moral intended and no problems of moment. George Raft gives a convincing portrayal of a gambler who manages a rather mediocre resort with the help of his three amusing henchmen. One night a beautiful lady (Dolores Costello Barrymore) in financial distress loses her last $500 and he suggests that they move into her palatial residence, join resources and draw patronage from her social set. His pals resent her intrusion and hire a particularly alluring adventuress (Ida Lupino) to break up the association. Reginald Owen poses as the girl's wealthy uncle, and the ruse works admirably until uncle's insatiably grasping nature and the girl's occasional lapses out of character spoil the deception. It is all highly amusing. Both Miss Lupino and Reginald Owen are decidedly clever in their roles. Mrs. Barrymore is reserved and attractive but has less opportunities for histronics.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Not recommended though absurdly farcical **Children, 8 to 12** Not suitable

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*Film suitable for family entertainment but not necessarily appropriate for children under 12 or for children unaccompanied by adults.

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Vol. X SEPTEMBER, 1936 No. 3

BOOK REVIEW

FILM AND THEATRE. By Allardyce Nicoll. Thomas Y. Crowell Company, Publishers, New York. Price $2.50.

Mr. Nicoll's keen comparative analysis of stage and screen is one which everyone who purports to be interested in either should read. He is an outstanding English authority on the theatre, author of many books on the subject and is now Chairman of the Department of Drama and Professor of History of Drama at Yale University. He is thus eminently fitted to present the subject and his book is scholarly and informative, with none of the confusion of too technical terminology which many of the exponents of screen technique have been prone to use.

Perhaps inevitably his discussion becomes a defense of movies as an art. He compares the astonishing similarity of the criticism of the average film of today with criticism of the Elizabethan stage in its day, and adds that, judging from this historical experience we should at least "examine briefly, the positive results so far brought forward" before judging the achievements of the film.

"The sight—with people of today at least—provides more stimulus to the imagination than the sense of hearing." This explains the great popularity of motion pictures and it does not, in Mr. Nicoll's opinion, restrict their importance. Actually the fact vitalizes pictures, and offers them their greatest promise. They are the product of a changing world and they need not compete with, nor eclipse the theatre if the theatre "recognizes to the full conditions of its own being and utilizes qualities which it, and it alone, possesses," or in other words, breaks away from realism and returns to the realm of poetry and conservative fantasy. This is a provocative viewpoint which will stimulate much discussion.

Mr. Nicolls takes up the basis and methods of motion pictures. Convinced that the narrational film deserves most attention, he compares the fundamental difference between screen plays and stage plays, and, using pictures as illustrations, points out the ways in which effects are reached in dramatic and cinematic technique. He clarifies among other fundamentals that meaning of filmic space, time, rhythm, montage, the use of sound and the importance of greater improvement in cinema scripts. It is a book which no one interested in film appreciation can afford to miss and regardless of personal prejudice for or against the movies, should be read in order better to evaluate the growth and development of pictures today and their ultimate promise.

L. O. V.

FEATURE FILMS

BACK TO NATURE » »

Jed Prouty, Shirley Deane, Dixie Dunbar, Tony Martin, Spring Byington, Kenneth Howell, George Ernest, June Carlson, Florence Roberts, Billy Mahan, and Ivan Miller. Direction by James Tinling. 20th Century-Fox.

Another episode in the lives of that average American family, the *Joneses*. On a trailer coach vacation to a mountain resort, the *Jones* family have some unscheduled excitement with the irrepressible *Bonnie* and her adolescent love affair. After a hair-raising ride down the mountain side she is rescued in time by her father and brother. Beautiful photography, excellent acting, and clean wholesome comedy make this picture most enjoyable in spite of its somewhat melodramatic ending.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Delightful

Children, 8 to 12
Yes

CAIN AND MABEL » »

Marion Davies, Clark Gable, Allen Jenkins, Roscoe Karns, Walter Catlett, David Carlyle. From the story by H. C. Witmer. Screen play by Laird Doyle. Direction by Lloyd Bacon. Warner Brothers.

A rollicking comedy which is rather long in getting under way but which provides its audience with practically every form of entertainment from pageantry to prize fight. The slender plot concerned with the efforts of a ring champion and a professional dancer to build up public interest by pretending to be engaged, is merely the thread upon which is strung some beautiful specialty numbers and a very realistic fight. Crisp, witty dialogue, beautiful costumes and some catchy music give the picture a high entertainment value. Some trite devices are used, but much may be forgiven a picture so colorful and sparkling.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Entertaining

Children, 8 to 12
No interest

CHINA CLIPPER » »

Pat O'Brien, Beverly Roberts, Ross Alexander, Humphrey Bogart, Marie Wilson, Henry B. Walthall. Screen play by Frank Wead. Direction by Raymond Enright. First National.

The development of commercial aviation from a period soon after the World War until the first flight of the giant "China Clipper" is dramatically set forth in this picture. The apparently authentic history of this branch of aviation is interwoven with the fictional adventures of three men whose vision and courage and determination in the face of all kinds of handicaps undoubtedly typify the real leaders who have made the "Clipper" an actuality. No one who has seen this picture will be likely to forget the thrilling moment when the "Clipper" rises from San Francisco Bay on its first long flight to China or the almost unbearable suspense of waiting for the radio calls that tell of its safe landing at Midway Island. The photography is superb, and the drama reaches a high pitch of excitement. The parts of the picture dealing with the personal stories of the characters, although sufficiently interesting, are rather a commonplace prelude, but the aviation sequences are not to be missed.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Excellent

Children, 8 to 12
Yes, if interested in aviation

DRAEGERMEN COURAGE » »

Jean Muir, Barton MacLane, Henry O'Neill, Robert Barrat, Addison Richards, and Helen MacKellar. Direction by Louis King. Warner Brothers-First National.

Gripping and dramatic account of the reformation of a greedy mine owner when he and two other men are trapped in a mine cave-in. Following newspaper accounts of recent mine disasters, this one has an added love interest. Commendably restained direction keeps all shots free of the hysterical horror which might easily have marred the entertainment value of this excellently photographed and properly focused story.

Adolescents, 12 to 16
Very tense and harrowing

Children, 8 to 12
No. Too much realism, story unsuitable

DON'T TURN 'EM LOOSE » »

Lewis Stone, James Gleason, Bruce Cabot, Louise Latimer, Betty Grable. Suggested by a story of Thomas Walsh's. Screen play by Harry Segall and Ferdinand Reyher. Direction by Ben Stoloff. R.K.O.

Don't turn loose on society the incorrigible criminals who are serving prison terms for heinous offences. Herein lies the message of this picture which portrays the functioning of an inefficient parole board. Since the question of parole is a timely and vital issue, it is a pity that the story was not made more plausible. In the opening scene we witness the granting of a parole to a hardened criminal who has hired a wife and baby to plead for him. This incredible performance is followed by a portrayal of the crook's double life as the leader of a notorious gang, and at the same time as the respected son of a superintendent of schools, explaining his long absences from home while in prison with tales of business engagements in foreign countries. That his hideous career as a murderer and bank robber should have been followed even while he was under his father's

roof, although possible is not very likely. When his father, yielding to the earnest pleas of the Governor, accepts a position on the parole board and meeting his convict son face to face, frees him but later shoots him, the melodrama becomes almost farcical. Good acting on the part of the leading characters barely redeems it. Although in the end the wages of sin is death, a discriminating audience will find the play more dramatic than convincing.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Exciting and too melodramatic

Children, 8 to 12 Far too lurid

▼

THE FINAL HOUR » »

Ralph Bellamy, Marguerite Churchill, John Gallaudet, George McKay, and Elizabeth Risdon. Direction by D. Ross Lederman. Columbia.

A story of kidnapping, murder, gangsters and "gun-molls." The reformation of the leading character, although skilfully portrayed by Ralph Bellamy, is insufficient to leaven the sodden mass of the unsavory remainder. A once successful young attorney goes down to the dregs of existence when he is divorced by his wife. He meets there the sweetheart of a reformed gangster. The story concerns the efforts of the gangster's former associates to get him back into the "mob" again. When this gangster is killed the attorney gets his bereaved sweetheart. Decidedly not worth the effort and cost of production.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No

Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

GUNS OF THE PECOS » »

Dick Foran, Anne Nagel, Gordon Hart, Joseph Crehan. Screen play by Harold Buckley. Direction by Noel Smith. First National.

The story is of a Texas Ranger who wanders about the country with no apparent aim in life and therefore unhampered in his efforts to bring a gang of maurading horse thieves to justice. To be noted are good photography, a thrilling drive of horses, pleasant singing by Dick Foran, the ascendancy of right and the downfall of the wicked. The theme, however is less important than the exhibition of shooting and riding, and there is no presentation of the permanent achievements of the Rangers.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fair

Children, 8 to 12 Too exciting

▼

GYPSIES » »

Alexander Granach, N. Mondvino. Direction by Schneider. Amkino.

The picture opens with a caravan of gypsies traveling across a trackless wilderness singing as they go. They finally reach a collective farming settlement where an agent of the Soviet government offers them land to induce them to become farmers. The farmers are shown as a happy carefree group reaping their crops and in the evening joining in dances and other festivities. Life on the collective farms is depicted as a joyous and idyllic existence. Aside from the fact that the development of the story is hampered by the necessity for propaganda the picture is most interesting. It has a definite fascination on account of the wild barbaric gypsy music that forms its accompaniment, and its actors (some from the Moscow Art Theatre) provide better acting than is usual in Soviet films.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Calls for mature judgment

Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

THE GORGEOUS HUSSY » »

Joan Crawford, Lionel Barrymore, Robert Taylor, Franchot Tone, Melvin Douglas. Direction by Clarence Brown. From the novel by Samuel Hopkins Adams. M-G-M.

Against the colorful background of Washington politics and society during the presidency of Andrew Jackson, this extraordinary picture presents the life of *Peggy O'Neale*, the daughter of an inn-keeper. *Peggy* met many of the famous men of the day, who were frequent guests at her father's inn, and through her friendship with President and Mrs. Jackson, and his political rival, John Randolph, became a prominent figure in Washington and was often the target for malicious gossip. The cast is well balanced, and the contrasting figures of the rugged pioneer *Jackson*, and the Southern gentleman, *Randolph of Roanoke*, are superbly done by Barrymore and Douglas respectively. Joan Crawford as *Peggy* gives perhaps her best performance to date. Minor parts are well cast, and the acting throughout deserves the highest praise. Direction is outstanding, the story is skilfully unfolded, and the attention to detail in costume and settings is unusually good. The picture is a fascinating presentation of one of the most stirring periods in American history.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent

Children, 8 to 12 Beyond their understanding

▼

HIS BROTHER'S WIFE » »

Barbara Stanwyck, Robert Taylor, Jean Hersholt, John Eldredge, Samuel S. Hinds. Story by George Auerbach. Direction by W. S. Van Dyke. M-G-M.

Chris is a perennial adolescent who steals the heart of a young and unsuspecting model by his prowess in collecting cabmen's, icemen's, any kind of men's hats. Suddenly *Chris* grows up and becomes a serious scientist leaving *Rita* in order to track spotted fever in the tropics, while she achieves revenge by marrying his brother.

In the end the various relationships are adjusted with the inevitable happy ending. The picture tells a convincing lie. Arrant selfishness and supreme courage are seldom combined in the same character, yet many people are willing to accept such fallacies when they come in tinsel wrappings.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 False standards — **Children, 8 to 12** No

I'D GIVE MY LIFE » »

Sir Guy Standing, Frances Drake, Tom Brown, Janet Beecher, Robert Gleckler, Helen Lowell. From the play "The Noose," by H. H. Van Loan and Willard Mack. Direction by Edwin L. Martin. Paramount.

This is frank propaganda against capital punishment. It would be far more effective however if the boy could not have been saved on the ground of self-defense by any good criminal lawyer. The main facts are melodramatic. Young *Nickie* shoots his own father to save his mother's honorable name, yet the boy's part is played by Tom Brown with such simplicity and real sincerity that tears brim in one's eyes. Sir Guy Standing makes a fine figure as the Governor; Robert Gleckler is an unusually suave villain. There are light moments and some comedy relief, but those who are averse to harrowing prison scenes will find parts of this picture a painful experience.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too tense — **Children, 8 to 12** No

LADY BE CAREFUL » »

Lew Ayres, Mary Carlisle, Larry Crabbe, and Benny Baker. From the stage play of the same name by Kenyon Nickolson and Charles Robinson. Direction by J. T. Reed. Paramount.

A light but unobjectionable trifle dealing with a sailor's attempts to win the affections of one *Billie "Stonewall" Jackson,* hard-boiled cabaret dancer. The sailor's pals have bet their all on his ability to get from her her prized "Miss Panama" ribbon. The ribbon he accidentally delivers to them, the girl he wins after the usual silly misunderstandings and reconciliations. The picture carefully eliminates the questionable elements of the original play but it is doubtful if the effort was worth while.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Not objectionable — **Children, 8 to 12** Too mature

THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS » »

Randolph Scott, Binnie Barnes, Henry Wilcoxon, Bruce Cabot, Heather Angel, Phillip Reed, Robert Barrat, Hugh Buckler, Willard Robertson, William Stack. Direction by George B. Seitz. From the book by James Fenimore Cooper. Screen play by Philip Dunne. Reliance Productions (U.A.)

This colorful dramatization of an American classic vividly brings to life a chapter of early Colonial history, and because of its authenticity, has educational as well as entertainment value. The actors are admirably cast, and careful attention to costuming, properties and sound effects give the picture a distinctive realism. It tells the story of the struggle between the English and French for possession of the American continent, each using Indian allies in bitter warfare. The inevitable cruelties resulting are skilfully managed, while the primitive Indian is shown at his best and at his worst. Emphasis is placed on the high military ideals of the leaders of the conflicting armies, and the entire theme would seem inevitably to inspire in youthful audiences a lofty code of patriotism and personal courage. The romance is convincing, and the exciting dangers and hairbreadth escapes are plausible and thrilling. The picture is ideal entertainment for American boyhood, but this does not limit its appeal for other audiences.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent — **Children, 8 to 12** Very exciting

MEET NERO WOLFE » »

Edward Arnold, Lionel Stander, Nana Bryant, Victor Jory. Direction by Herbert Biberman. From a story by Rex Stout. Columbia.

Many readers of detective fiction will remember the eccentric detective, *Nero Wolfe,* who never leaves his home, drinks vast quantities of beer, and grows orchids for recreation. His outside contacts are made only by his assistant, *Archie,* who brings in such information as may be needed, and serves as the butt of his employer's witticisms. The crime in this story occurs on a golf course, when a man is killed by a poisoned needle fixed in the shaft of a golf club. During the investigation another murder is disclosed and the plot is developed with the complications common to mystery stories. Some humor is provided by the efforts of *Archie* and his fiancée to outguess the master detective. Acting and direction are good, within the limits of a somewhat talky story. The picture should interest those who have a taste for a leisurely mystery wtihout much action.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes — **Children, 8 to 12** No interest

PICCADILLY JIM » »

Robert Montgomery, Frank Morgan, Eric Blore, Ralph Forbes, and Madge Evans. From the book by P. G. Wodehouse. Direction by Robert Z. Leonard. M-G-M.

Absurd and mildly boring slapstick involving a newspaper cartoonist and his love whose family he has made ridiculous through his funny strip "From Rags to Riches—The Richswitch Family," a sort of "Maggie and Jiggs" series. The usual comedy scenes

inherent in such a situation develop with irritating regularity. Not even the deft skill of Robert Montgomery nor the excellent characterizations of Ralph Morgan and Eric Blore can quite overcome the handicap of threadbare story, unoriginal dialogue, and uninspired direction.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No, too much drinking

Children, 8 to 12 No

POSTAL INSPECTOR » »

Ricardo Cortez, Patricia Ellis, Michael Loring. From a story by Robert Presnell and Horace McCall. Direction by Otto Brown. Universal.

Some excellent shots of last year's middle-western floods, a bit of education in the more flagrant ways in which money is taken from an unsuspecting public by fraudulent advertising, splendid photography of an airplane flight in heavy fog, a speech by President Roosevelt, a somewhat incredible story involving gangsters, postal inspectors and young lovers, constitute the elements which are deftly moulded by good direction and capable acting into rather better than average entertainment. When the boy and girl innocently become involved in a postal robbery, they determine with the usual foolishness of screen lovers to solve the mystery themselves instead of turning over the problem to the proper authorities. They attempt the solution—again in accepted movie tradition—by walking directly into the hideout of the gang. Postal inspectors and police arrive in time, however, and all ends happily.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12 Certainly not

RHYTHM ON THE RANGE » »

Bing Crosby, Frances Farmer, Bob Burns, Samuel S. Hinds, Lucile W. Gleason, Martha Raye. Direction by Norman Taurog. Paramount.

There is one novel situation in this film: a New York socialite travels West in a box car with a bull and a cowboy. Bing Crosby is the same as usual, which is sufficient recompense for his admirers, even if some of the songs seem warmed over from yesterday's menu. Martha Raye's attempts at comedy are repulsive. It is one of those pictures which have no particular value but provide an hour's diversion for the easily-pleased.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fair

Children, 8 to 12 Mature

SECOND WIFE » »

Gertrude Michael, Walter Abel, Erik Rhodes, Emma Dunn, Lee Van Atta, Brenda Fowler, Frank Reicher, and George Breakston. Direction by Edward Kelly. R.K.O.-Radio.

A story of the difficulties of a second marriage when the father is torn between loyalty to his young wife and love for the adolescent son of his first marriage. Because its problem is familiar, it will hold the interest of the average audience, but the discriminating may feel that it is theatrical rather than convincing and that sympathy is at times sacrificed to effect. The manner in which true love settles the problem arising when the husband leaves his young wife almost on the eve of her accouchement to hurry to his son who is ill in Switzerland will interest but scarcely convince in spite of the intelligent and sincere acting of the leading characters.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Nothing harmful though may not be interesting

Children, 8 to 12 Unsuitable story

SHAKEDOWN » »

Lew Ayres and Joan Perry. Story by Barry Shipman. Direction by David Selman. Columbia.

Very thin entertainment, of young love, an incredibly heroic messenger boy, a faked kidnapping which turns real, a disappearing corpse, secret panels in a deserted night club, the dumb newspaper reporter with the trick comedy hat, the gambling debt motive for murder—in fact all the old familiars for this type of entertainment. The cast is for the most part capable but not sufficiently so to offset indifferent direction and badly worn plot. *Edith Stuart,* who plots her own kidnapping, puts herself and her father in line for blackmail when one of the kidnappers is murdered. The amazing messenger boy lover solves the plot in spite of police effort to assist him, gets his promotion and the girl.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Poor

Children, 8 to 12 No

SING, BABY, SING » »

Alice Faye, Adolphe Menjou, Gregory Ratoff, Ted Healy, Patsy Kelly. Story by Milton Sperling and Jack Yellen. Direction by Sidney Lanfield. Twentieth Century-Fox.

Notwithstanding a denial in the foreword, the interpretation put upon this film by most people will be that it is a thinly veiled take-off on the Barrymore-Barrie rencounters. It is a noisy farce with musical interludes, inartistic and overplayed. While the Ritz Brothers are clever and undeniably versatile, their strident voices and grotesque dances soon become exhausting. Adolphe Menjou contributes good comedy, as he always does. He has the part of a vacationing movie star who becomes involved in scandal through a predilection for bay rum.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No

Children, 8 to 12 No

A SON COMES HOME » »

Mary Boland, Julie Haydon, Donald Woods, Wallace Ford, Roger Imhof, Anthony Nace, Gertrude W. Hoffman, Eleanor Wesselhoeft, Charles Middleton and Thomas Jackson. Direction by E. A. Dupont. Para.

A sensational melodrama heavily sugared with the sentimentality of mother love. *Mary Grady* (Mary Boland) waterfront angel, and specialist in clam chowders, waits fifteen years for her renegade son to return. This he finally does as a result of a newspaper story celebrating the twenty-fifth year of Mary's eating house on San Francisco's Fishermen's Wharf. However a murder, a false arrest, a hold-up, and the ubiquitous newspaper reporter who solves the mystery intervene between the rather placid beginning and the final scene when the real son is shot and the heroic pseudo-son claims his mother and the girl. Mary Boland's ingratiating comedy is insufficient to balance inept direction which has consciously played up the insincere and improbable to harry the emotions. Good waterfront photography.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No
Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

STAR FOR A NIGHT » »

Claire Trevor, Jane Darwell, Arline Judge, Evelyn Venable, J. Edward Bromberg, Dean Jagger, Alan Dinehart. Based on the play "Die Heilige Luege" by Karin Michaelis. Direction by Lewis Seiler. Twentieth Century-Fox.

This is an appealing story of three young people who have come to America as immigrants and have sent a rainbow-hued version of their success to a blind mother at home. How they maintain the illusion when she comes to join them and turn the product of their imagination into something approaching reality, makes it a drama of real human interest. The scenes from *Anna's* show, when she rises from her place as understudy to become a leading lady for a night, are beautiful with good singing and dancing. The dialogue rings true, and all parts are sincerely taken.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes
Children, 8 to 12 Probably mature

▼

STAGE STRUCK » »

Dick Powell, Joan Blondell, Warren William, Frank McHugh, Jeanne Madden, Carol Hughes, Craig Reynolds, Hobart Cavanaugh, Johnnie Arthur, Spring Byington, and the Yacht Club boys. Direction by Busby Berkeley. Warner Brothers-First National.

A trivial and stereotyped bit of backstage nonsense which attempts to be different from the usual picture of this sort by omitting the lavish and specacular effects which such a story usually includes. The attempt is unsuccessful because the story is not of sufficient moment to carry interest and the disjointed manner in which it is presented discourages even the most rabid Powell-Blondell fans. When a young stage struck girl (Jeanne Madden) attempts to enter a Broadway revue, the dance director (Dick Powell) in a talk full of fatherly advice suggests that she work in a flower shop instead. The girl fails to follow this advice however, and is rewarded when on opening night the leading lady demonstrates her great love for her leading man by shooting him, thereby putting them both out of the play and the stage struck one and the infatuated dance director in. This ought to give you an idea.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Depends upon taste
Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

TWO IN A CROWD » »

Joan Bennett, Joel McCrea, Elisha Cook, Jr., Henry Armetta. Direction by Alfred E. Green. Universal.

Larry Stevens played in a debonair and nonchalant manner by Joel McCrea is the improverished owner of a race horse upon which he pins his hopes of recouping his fortunes. Pending the race the finding of the two halves of a thousand dollar bill helps to smooth out financial difficulties, and an argument over its ownership leads to a friendship and a romance with the charming *Miss Julia Wayne* played by Joan Bennett, *Larry*, his pal *Skeeter*, *Julia* and *Jonesey* who stables the horses, live through many vicissitudes and some amusing situations until the day of the race, when the right horse wins in characteristic fashion and all ends happily. The story drags a great deal of the time and lacks a coherent central plot. Although a few of the humorous situations evoke a genuine laugh, the majority seem forced, lack spontaneity, and fall rather flat.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Passable
Children, 8 to 12 No

▼

WALKING ON AIR » »

Gene Raymond, Ann Sothern, Jessie Ralph, Henry Stephenson, Gordon Jones. From the story by Frances M. Cockrell. Screen play by Bert Kalmer, Harry Ruby. Viola B. Shore and Rian James. Direction by James Santley. R.K.O.

Innocuous farce comedy concerning a wilful girl whose father tries to prevent an unsuitable marriage. Each tries to outwit the other, and the ensuing entanglements and absurdities combined with rather attractive music make acceptable entertainment of the lighter type. Gene Raymond is shown to advantage as both singer and actor, and Ann Sothern is alluring as the girl whose plans prove to be a boomerang. The lesser roles are played by veterans who provide excellent characterizations.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good
Children, 8 to 12 Unobjectionable

YELLOWSTONE » »

Henry Hunter, Judith Barrett, Ralph Morgan, Alan Hale, Andy Devine, Monroe Owsley, and Raymond Hatton. From an original story by Arthur Phillips. Direction by Arthur Lubin. Universal.

A murder melodrama laid in beautiful Yellowstone Park. This piquant combination will not be enjoyed by those who like the beauty of nature unmarred by bandits and sudden death. Most audiences, however, will enjoy the rather adroit interweaving of love and mystery against the superb background of falls, geysers, and high mountain trails. *Ruth Foster* welcomes her father who has supposedly been in Australia for the past eighteen years. He has in reality been in San Quentin and is returning to Yellowstone merely to claim the bandit cache which he had hidden there. He is of course trailed by others having knowledge of his past. The novel denouement is concerned with the way in which powerful old Mother Nature destroys all the bandits leaving Ruth and her ranger lover. Hilarious comedy is furnished by Andy Devine and Raymond Hatton while Ralph Morgan is pleasingly sinister and suavely appealing in the role of the father.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Matter of taste

Children, 8 to 12 No

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LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

OCTOBER 1936

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Feature Films Reviewed in this Issue

Adventure in Manhattan
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*Swing Time
The Tattler
*The Texas Rangers
*They Met in a Taxi
*Thank You, Jeeves
Three Married Men
Valiant Is the Word for Carrie
Wedding Present
Without Orders
Wives Never Know

*Film suitable for family entertainment but not necessarily appropriate for children under 12 or for children unaccompanied by adults.

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LOS ANGELES BRANCH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN
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MOTION • PICTURE • REVIEWS

Published monthly by
THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB
LOS ANGELES BRANCH
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

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Address all communications to The Women's University Club, 943 So. Hoover St., Los Angeles, Calif.

10c Per Copy - - $1.00 Per Year

Vol. X **OCTOBER, 1936** **No. 4**

MUSICAL EFFECTS IN ROMEO AND JULIET

One of the most interesting and beautiful features of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's production "Romeo and Juliet," now being shown on the screen, is its musical background. These effects are well worth studying, for masterpieces of the world's forgotten music, unheard by the public for centuries, live again in a new and glorified form. Old English madrigals, ancient dance music, ecclesiastical chorals, are woven into the score and played by a great symphony orchestra to which were added ancient instruments on which the compositions were originally played in 1500. Obsolete instruments such as the virginal, lute, viola de gamba, tabor pipe, harpsichord and clavichord add color and beauty to the orchestration.

Research for the score began with the first announcement of the plan to produce the picture. Mr. Stothart consulted authorities on period music such as Percy Grainger and Dr. Gustav Reese of New York University. Dr. Reese collected the recordings of Rudolph Dolmetch, the great English authority who conducts the famous Elizabethan festivals where the music is played on the original instruments. Mr. Stothart also drew on material of Peter Warlock and Professor William Strunk, Jr., of Cornell University, and consulted photostatic copies of ancient music at the Congressional Library in Washington. Songs drawn from English sources of Shakespeare's day, and others assembled in 1600, such as "Heartease," mentioned in the script, dance music composed by Thoinot Arbeau, a French dance master of 1620, and chorals and chants of Italian origin weave meaning and beauty into a background for the action and the poetry of the text. Students will no doubt be greatly interested in the compositions of the period since recently there has been an aroused attention given to early music.

The possibilities for sound effects on the screen are enormously greater than on the stage. For example: Romeo and Juliet speak together as they dance at their first meeting, and their voices come to us undisturbed by the soft background of the festival music, for the director can pick up whatever sound he wishes to emphasize. (Attention should be given the charming dances chosen and directed by Miss DeMille.) In the street scenes the sound of bells, of song, of harmonies and discords do not detract from the voices of the characters as they carry on the action of the drama. The Capulet ball gives opportunity for the jovial songs of the merrymakers; the wedding festivities are opened by a bridal serenade which is interrupted by news of Juliet's death; the priests chant during her death trance. The play opens with cathedral and church chimes (campanile bells) and we hear soloists and response by a full choir. It is not necessary to point out all sequences which are made impressive or more moving by the musical background, but any lover of good music will find added enjoyment of the production because of it.

FEATURE FILMS

ADVENTURE IN MANHATTAN

Jean Arthur, Joel McCrea, Reginald Owen, Thomas Mitchell. Direction by Edward Ludwig, Columbia.

A comedy melodrama in which a cocky newspaper reporter wins the enmity of his pals because of an uncanny ability to prophesy in advance certain crimes of international importance. While the plot does not follow any set formula, the opening scenes are very reminiscent of "Mr. Deeds Comes to Town," with Jean Arthur again in a role in which she rescues a man whom she at first tricks, and the likable hero, Joel McCrea, is enough the physical type of Gary Cooper to put the audience on its guard fearing a lack of novelty and originality. The story becomes bewildering in its many ramifications and is only mildly entertaining. Reginald Owen, as usual, gives a sterling performance.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Probably entertaining

Children, 8 to 12 No

◇

ALL AMERICAN CHUMP

Stuart Erwin, Robert Armtrong, Betty Furness. Original screen play by Lawrence Kimble. Direction by Edwin L. Marin. M-G-M.

Elmer, the human adding machine, tries to capitalize on his mathematical genius by joining a carnival side show. Here he encounters the inevitable gangsters and after some disturbing adventures decides that the simple life is the best and retires to a dairy farm. The picture is no better than one would expect from such material. Stuart Erwin manages to be funny as *Elmer* but it is too bad he has such a poor vehicle.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Waste of time

Children, 8 to 12 Poor

◇

THE CASE OF THE BLACK CAT

Ricardo Cortez, June Travis, Jane Bryan, Craig Reynolds, Carlyle Moore, Jr. Story by Erle Stanley Gardner. Direction by William McGann. First National.

This is one of those films which owe their existence to the practice of double-billing. It is a passable mystery concerning a cantankerous old gentleman who has willed his large estate to a nephew, a caretaker and a cat, and suspecting foul play on the part of someone in his household, sends for his attorney to straighten out the matter. Ricardo Cortez appears with his usual suavity and resourcefulness, contributes the best moments of the film. The plot is so complicated that the cat gets lost in the shuffle.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fair

Children, 8 to 12 No value

THE CAPTAIN'S KID

May Robson, Guy Kibbee, Sybil Jason. Story by Tom Ried. Direction by Nick Grinde. First National.

Guy Kibbee, as *Asa Plunkette,* an old seaman, is a lifelong admirer of *Marcia Prentiss,* played by May Robson. Sybil Jason takes the part of *Abigail Prentiss, Marcia's* small neice, who loves *Asa* devotedly. Because *Asa* sometimes imbibes too freely, and lands in jail where he comfortably passes the time on intimate terms with the sheriff, *Marcia* makes every effort to keep *Abigail* away from him. *Abigail's* discovery of a treasure map, her search for the buried riches with *Asa,* and their adventures with two crooks, form the theme of the story. This picture is too inconsequential to do justice to the acting ability of May Robson and Guy Kibbee. It is an improbable comedy which may entertain because of its small town locale and the picturesque characters it portrays.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fair

Children, 8 to 12 Fair

◇

CRAIG'S WIFE

Rosalind Russell, John Boles, Billie Burke, Jane Darwell, Alma Kruger. Adapted from the Pulitzer Prize play by George Kelly. Direction by Dorothy Arzner. Columbia.

This is an impressive drama of a selfish, intolerant woman who builds a beautiful house but not a home, who lives only for herself and who is finally left alone to enjoy the doubtful benefits of her ambition. But the deeper significance of the play is in its psychology: what moulded the character of this beautiful young woman into its unpleasant form? In all her contacts with others she refuses to allow her emotions to be touched, and is reluctant to permit those closest to her to enjoy the normal social contacts of everyday life. In her warped desire for material security and beauty and her positive avoidance of spiritual values, she is unbelievably mean and cruel. Finally a chance comment by her on her early home environment and her mother's tragedy gives an explanation of her self-protective attitude. It is an exceedingly interesting problem drama, directed and acted with sensitive appreciation of the different values. Miss Russell is very fine and is ably supported by a well chosen cast.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Mature and of little value

Children, 8 to 12 No

DANIEL BOONE

George O'Brien, Heather Angel, John Carradine, Ralph Forbes, Clarence Muse, Dickie Jones. Story by Edgcomb Pinchon. Direction by David Howard. A George A. Hirliman Production. R. K. O.

Another hero from the pages of early American history is brought to life in this vivid drama of the days when settlers crossed the Alleghanies in a great wagon train to wrest homesteads from the wilderness and hostile Indians. The picture is as full of action as a Western thriller. It shows the life of the day, raw and violent. Untold hardships, Indian tortures, tragic deaths were realities, not chronicles of a yellowed page. George O'Brien has made the transition from lesser roles to that of an historic figure with a strong personality which dominates the action. John Carradine, Ralph Forbes and Dickie Jones are very good as widely diverse members of the party of settlers. Careful research on the life of Boone and the customs of his time make this a film which should stimulate an interest in history and give a clearer understanding of the ambition, sacrifice and steadfast courage of those who came before us.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good except for the sensitive

Children, 8 to 12 Probably harrowing

◇

THE DEVIL IS A SISSY

Freddie Bartholomew, Jackie Cooper, Mickey Rooney, Ian Hunter, Peggy Conklin, Jonathan Hale. From a story by Rowland Brown. Direction by W. S. Van Dyke. M-G-M.

This startling human document deals with one of the most pressing of our social problems: How shall we make good citizens of boys who lack good home environment? The picture relates the story of three boys, *Claude, Buck and Gig,* living in a poor section of New York. *Claude,* of English birth, finds it difficult to make friends with the others and to gain admittance to the "gang." *Gig's* father is executed for murder, and the boy strains every nerve to obtain enough money to buy a tombstone. With this purpose the three boys start a campaign of petty theft and are finally caught and brought into the Juvenile Court. They are defiant and refuse to tell their stories, but with great understanding the judge elicits the facts and impresses upon the boys that "toughness" and criminality are not manly qualities. The three boys give excellent performances, and the supporting cast is well chosen. The director has handled the involved plot with its numerous characters deftly, mingling pathos, humor and tragedy skilfully. The story reflects the point of view of real boys under modern metropolitan conditions and is an absorbingly interesting study of a phase of life which receives too little attention. It is artistic, unified and coherent.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Harrowing but may depend upon the individual

Children, 8 to 12 No

◇

DIMPLES

Shirley Temple, Frank Morgan, Helen Westley, Robert Kent, Stepin Fetchit. Screen play by Arthur Sheekman and Nat Perrin. Directed by William A. Seiter. Twentieth Century-Fox.

Obviously it is impossible to make all pictures featuring Shirley Temple equally good, but this one is disappointing. The story is below par, and Shirley herself though expert as ever in singing and dancing, and enticing with her glowing personality, is not quite the charming unaffected child we have learned to love. As *Dimples* she plays the part of a little urchin whose grandfather, *The Professor,* is a light fingered old reprobate. The two make a living by the *Professor's* petty thievery and the little girl's singing and dancing on the streets. *Dimples* of course, does not know at first that her grandfather is a thief, and when she finds out she makes haste to reform him. Their fortune is made when aquaintance with a theatre manager gives her an opportunity to appear on the stage. This incident of the plot is an excuse for interpolating a sequence in which Shirley appears as *Eva* in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Perhaps the picture would be more enjoyable if Shirley's followers had not been taught to expect better entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes

Children, 8 to 12 Passable

◇

DODSWORTH

Walter Huston, Ruth Chatterton, Mary Astor, Paul Lucas, David Niven, Gregory Gaye, Mme. Maria Cuspenskaya. Based on the novel by Sinclair Lewis, dramatized by Sidney Howard. Screen play by Sidney Howard. Direction by William Wyler. Sam Goldwyn Production. United Artists.

Sometimes stage plays are translated into the medium of the cinema so successfully that they lose none of the glamour of the more personal stage contact with the players. This seems especially true of "Dodsworth." It remains a play in which dialogue is of primary importance, but the players are as real and vital in their roles as on the stage, and the inclusion of further action and added backgrounds only serves to add interest and clarity to the problems involved. It is a faithful version of the play, and the cast, including several players from the original, is exceptionally fine. It is the story of a middle-aged American couple who break

away from their accustomed background and mode of life to spend their accumulated income and earned leisure in "enjoying life." The husband, somewhat crude socially but a splendid example of intelligent business man, sells his motor company and sets out for Europe to indulge the desire of his wife for travel and a search for lost youth. Mr. Huston plays the part so perfectly that one can imagine no one else doing it. Ruth Chatterton, as *Fran Dodsworth,* gives a brilliant interpretation of the wife who loses her perspective away from home and who becomes dazzled by the false standards of shallow European acquaintances in her frantic search for romance. Her performance makes us understand a most unsympathetic character and regret the necessity for her eventual bitter defeat. An outstanding bit is given by Mme. Maria Cuspenskaya in the brief role of *Baroness von Obersdorf,* the keen, outspoken Viennese noblewoman. Mary Astor is reserved and moving as *Mrs. Courtright.* Too bitter and sardonic in theme for youthful appreciation, it should have special interest for mature audiences because of the splendid adaptation and high production values.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too mature — **Children, 8 to 12** No interest

◇

EVERYTHING IS THUNDER

Constance Bennett, Douglas Montgomery, Oscar Homolka. From the novel by J. L. Lardy. Direction by Milton Rosmer. Gaumont-British.

The story of the escape of a British Officer from a German prison camp and his encounter with a girl of the streets, who gives him shelter, has been told many times. The excellent acting of the principals and the romance which develops between them, lift this picture above the level of most war pictures. Stirring and touching are the efforts of the girl to save the man she has grown to love. The German detective is finally outwitted, and the couple escape to Holland through a cordon of soldiers. The direction is somewhat choppy, numerous cut-backs obscure the development of the plot, and the ending is so abrupt that the picture seems unfinished. Although it is a war story, there are no battle scenes, and the interest is focused on the love between the officer and the girl who has taken him to her home.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No — **Children, 8 to 12** No interest

◇

THE GAY DESPERADO

Nino Martini, Ida Lupino, Leo Carillo, Harold Huber, James Blakeley, Stanley Fields, Mischa Auer. A Rouben Mamoulian Production. United Artists.

A merry musical farce, loaded with laughs and fine music, altogether delightful. The story concerns a jolly bandit, *Braganza,* and his followers who have been attending a cinema about American gangsters and have become so excited that they all begin to fight among themselves. Listening to the voice of *Chivo* from the stage, they become spellbound and grow quiet. *Braganza* is so entranced that he carries *Chivo* off with him. Then the bandits, emulating the American gangsters, kidnap an American boy and girl who had come over the border. *Chivo* falls in love with the girl. Exciting adventures and pursuits ensue. The background of desert and mountain scenery is beautifully photographed, Martini's Mexican songs are a treat, Carillo is perfect in his part, the whole thing is most entertaining.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes — **Children, 8 to 12** Too exciting

◇

THE GENERAL DIES AT DAWN

Gary Cooper, Madeleine Carroll, Akim Tamiroff, Dudley Digges, Porter Hall, William Frawley. From a novel by Charles G. Booth. Directed by Lewis Milestone. Paramount.

Exciting, well photographed melodrama with good local color and a tremendous climax. Its weaknesses are trite dialogue and a plot that depends for its situations on the stupidity of a hero who continually exposes himself to obvious dangers. The picture contains too much brutality for young audiences but will probably be popular with adults who enjoy secret agents, Chinese war lords and beautiful girl spies.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No — **Children, 8 to 12** Harrowing

◇

THE GIRL ON THE FRONT PAGE

Edmund Lowe, Gloria Stuart, Reginald Owen, Spring Bylngton. Story by Ray and Marjorie Chanslor. Direction by Harry Beaumont. Universal.

A story of newspaper life is never complete without a "hard-boiled" managing editor. The principal point of interest in this case is that a young girl inherits her father's paper and undertakes to run it. The editor resents her interference, as do other members of the staff. An unnecessary and irrelevant sub-plot is introduced when the girl is blackmailed by her own butler. The dialogue is amusing and the action swift. Acting and direction are good, though not outstanding.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Not recommended — **Children, 8 to 12** No interest

◇

HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD

John Halliday, Marsha Hunt, Robert Cummings, C. Henry Gordon, Frieda Inescourt. Based on a story by Faith Thomas. Direction by Robert Florey. Paramount.

An elderly actor, on the eve of complete oblivion, is given an opportunity to reinstate

himself in the public interest by writing his memoirs for a "confession" magazine. The notoriety following their publication is quite disastrous. Episodes of the many people who have entered his life overload the plot, and little sympathy is developed for any of them. Those who read the film fan magazines might care for this.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No
Children, 8 to 12 No

◇

IN HIS STEPS

Eric Linden, Cecilia Parker, Harry Beresford, Clara Blandick, Roger Imhof. Suggested by the story "In His Steps," written by Charles M. Sheldon. Screen play by Karl Brown and Hinton Smith. Direction by Karl Brown. B. F. Zeidman Productions, Ltd.

The straightforward sincerity of this picture commends it to a varied audience. Through the influence of a fine old man, two young people who have been spoiled by too much money and not enough self-discipline learn the value of absolute honesty and self-respecting hard work. The film carries an obvious message and is unusually appealing because it does not try to camouflage its purpose. The story is told with a good deal of humor and has its quota of dramatic situations. It leaves with the audience a pleasant memory of association with worthwhile human characters.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Very good
Children, 8 to 12 No interest

◇

ISLE OF FURY

Humphrey Bogart, Margaret Lindsay, Donald Woods, Paul Graetz, Gordon Hart, E. E. Clive. Based on a novel by Somerset Maugham. Direction by Frank McDonald. Warner Bros.

An absurdly juvenile mystery story involving a murderer, his beautiful young wife, a philosophizing old doctor, and the detective who comes to the island to return the murderer to justice. His decision to leave the murderer undisturbed is composed of one part gratitude to the murderer, who had saved him from death by drowning, and one part love for the beautiful young wife of the hunted man. A magnificent tropical storm with excellent accompanying music and the personality of Humphrey Bogart can scarcely offset a trite and silly story and the pernicious notion that a murderer unrepentant should be allowed to escape justice if he has a sufficiently beautiful wife, and adequate courage to fight an octopus.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No
Children, 8 to 12 No

KING OF THE ROYAL MOUNTED

Robert Kent, Rosalind Keith, Alan Dinehart, Frank McGlynn. From a story by Zane Grey. Direction by Howard Bretherton. Produced by Sol Lesser. Released by Twentieth Century-Fox.

Like others from the Zane Grey collection, this film is weak dramatically and has a thin plot, but it has fine riding and pictures a wide sweep of very beautiful country. An unscrupulous lawyer seeks to swindle a young girl out of her interest in a mine, and her position is precarious until the arrival of a member of the Mounted Police.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes
Children, 8 to 12 Passable

◇

THE LONGEST NIGHT

Robert Young, Florence Rice, Ted Healy, Julie Haydon, Catherine Doucet. From the story "The Whispering Window," by Cortland Fitzsimmons. Screen play by Robert Andrews. Direction by Errol Taggart. M-G-M.

It is seldom our lot to review such a chaotic, melodramatic picture as this one. After a series of murders at night in a large department store, a wild chase begins, with suspects, gangsters and detectives rushing about in the dark while gun shots, screams, crashing dishes and a wild musical accompaniment increase the din and confusion. Though intended to be farcial the picture is not funny, and it is too poorly done to be interesting even as a murder mystery.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Poor
Children, 8 to 12 Impossible

◇

MUMMY'S BOYS

Bert Wheeler, Robert Woolsey, Moroni Olsen. Story by Jack Townley and Lew Lipton. Direction by Fred Guiol. R. K. O.

The picture is a farce with a touch of mystery. An expedition to excavate an ancient Egyptian tomb with a curse hanging over those who desecrate it, is the basis of the story. Some views of Cairo and the caravan crossing the desert are interesting. The attempts at humor of the famous comedy team fall flat, and the dialogue is dull. The acting and directing are mediocre. The production lacks both interest and humor.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Harmless
Children, 8 to 12 No

◇

MURDER WITH PICTURES

Lew Ayres, Gail Patrick, Onslow Stevens. Based on a story by George Harmon Coxe. Direction by Charles Barton. Paramount.

A few unusual and interesting quirks in the plot make this otherwise routine murder mystery fairly entertaining. The plot deals with a vast amount of material about the

adventures of an oil racketeer and is often disconnected. The picture is well cast, but the direction is somewhat weak, and the story seems unreal because there is no delineation of character.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fair **Children, 8 to 12** No

◇

OLD HUTCH

Wallace Beery, Eric Linden, Cecilia Parker, Ellzabeth Patterson. From a story by Garret Smith. Direction by J. Walter Ruben. M-G-M.

Wallace Beery makes a decided impression as *Old Hutch,* a village loafer who spends his time fishing while his wife works to support the family. Ironically enough he finds a large sum of stolen money and is forced to go to work in order to account for its possession. The story is a bucolic comedy, with a minor love interest. The supporting cast is excellent, and the director has knitted a flimsy plot into an interesting and sometimes, touching play.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes **Children, 8 to 12** Yes

◇

POLO JOE

Joe E. Brown, Carol Hughes, "Skeets" Gallagher, Fay Holton. Screen play by Peter Milne and Hugh Cummings. Direction by Willlam McGann. Warner Brothers.

For followers of this popular comedian a banal plot apparently does not detract from the hilarious fun of his latest opus. The thin thread of story concerns a wealthy young man who sneezes at horses but who of course falls in love with a girl who loves them and admires polo players. To win her he has to play the game. The incidents are comically absurd, and Joe E. Brown, in not forcing the comedy, sustains the humor admirably. The picture is good family entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good **Children, 8 to 12** Good

◇

RAMONA

Loretta Young, Don Ameche, Kent Taylor, Pauline Frederick, Jane Darwell, Katherine De Mille. Based on novel by Helen Hunt Jackson. Screen play by Lamar Trotti. Direction by Henry King. Technicolor photography by William V. Skall, directed by Natalie Kalmus. Twentieth Century-Fox.

The pastoral beauty of California and the picturesque costumes and action of the period are ideal subject matter for color photography and add immeasurably to the charm of this picturization of Helen Hunt Jackson's beloved story. Lamar Trotti's screen version is dignified and charming. He has shortened the lover's long and bitter experiences, leaving out entirely *Alessandro's* mental breakdown. This does not lessen the pathos but the ending seems too abrupt, promising too sudden a release for the heroine. Those familiar with the story will have to add in imagination the steps which give her ultimate contentment. The cast is very satisfactory. Loretta Young is beautiful, and Pauline Frederick is excellent in an unsympathetic role. Don Ameche is an ideal *Alessandro,* reserved, dignified and entirely worthy of the heroine's devotion. The Jesuit priest, *Father Gasper,* is finely drawn by Victor Killan. Katherine De Mille stands out in a lesser role. It is a charming story, always fresh and always worth seeing.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent **Children, 8 to 12** Depends on maturity

◇

THE SEA SPOILERS

John Wayne, Nan Grey, Willlam Bakewell, "Fuzzy" Knight, Russell Hicks. Story by Dorrell and Stuart McGowan. Direction by Frank Strayer. Universal.

Up on the Alaskan coast poachers are causing havoc among the seals, with two valiant souls from the U. S. Coast Guard hot in pursuit. It is good rousing melodrama with an undercurrent of humor, given interest by the background of sea and wild coast. The parts are suitably cast, dialogue passable. It is a program picture of no great value but fairly entertaining of its class.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fair **Children, 8 to 12** No value

◇

SEVEN SINNERS

Edmund Lowe, Constance Cummings. Direction by Albert de Courville. Gaumont-British.

Carnival at Nice, with its fireworks, grotesque false faces, bands blaring, streets crowded with dancers, is a fitting opening for this international mystery-melodrama. Numerous train wrecks, murders, and amateur detective work by an American couple, are the basis of this confused and involved story, which is amusing at times, but lacks logic and coherence. The work of the principals is good within the limits of the story, but the direction is inadequate.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No value and too exciting **Children, 8 to 12** No—too exciting

◇

STRAIGHT FROM THE SHOULDER

Ralph Bellamy, Katherine Locke, Andy Clyde, David Holt. From a story by Lucian Cary. Direction by Stuart Heisler. Paramount.

The courage of an innocent child, coupled with the detective skill of an artist results in establishing the identity of a band of bank robbers and leads to the final capture of the criminals. The story deals far more with the very human and likeable members of

the little family group than with the gangsters, and as such is a pleasing variation of the crook-drama theme. David Holt is particularly natural as the small boy. There are, however, some of the faults which usually accompany melodrama, and while this is a satisfactory program picture, it has no great merit.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes — **Children, 8 to 12** Too tense

◇

SWING TIME

Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, Eric Blore, Georges Metaxa, Victor Moore, Helen Broderick. Direction by George Stevens. Music by Jerome Kern. Lyrics by Dorothy Fields. R. K. O.

This delightful musical comedy is more than a background for the exquisite dancing of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, for it has a charming love story, full of unexpected humor. The famous dance team are at their best, and Victor Moore and Helen Broderick are responsible for much hilarity. Miss Rogers shows unexpected ability as a comedienne. The dance numbers are generously provided, lyrics and music are unusually good and both photography and direction are outstanding. The production sets a swift pace and is excellent entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent — **Children, 8 to 12** Excellent

◇

THE TATTLER

Ross Alexander, Glenda Farrell, Anne Nagel, Craig Reynolds, Hobart Cavanaugh. From a story by Mickey Jacoby. Direction by William Clemens. First National.

This is an involved and meaningless tale about a young Hollywood press agent and his efforts to establish himself as a gossip columnist of the air. He persuades the owner of a radio station to employ him to broadcast intimate scandal, mostly fictitious, about the lives of Hollywood personalities and uses his position to embarrass his former employer and others against whom he has a grudge. Finally, after he has lost most of his friends and his fiancee has deserted him, he amends his ways. The acting and direction are competent, but do not redeem the story from its innate vulgarity.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Low ethical standards — **Children, 8 to 12** No interest

◇

THE TEXAS RANGERS

Fred MacMurray, Jack Oakie, Jean Parker, Lloyd Nolan, Bennie Bartlett. From a story by King Vidor and Elizabeth Hill. Direction by King Vidor. Paramount.

This epic of early days in Texas has for background the enormous sweep of the range. The story tells of bandits and Indians and the devotion and ideals of the Texas Rangers. There is a pleasant romance. A group of "bad men" are brought back to peaceful ways by their respect for the work of the Rangers and the influence of a little boy. The picture is exceptionally well cast. The direction is most skillful, and scenic backgrounds and action are beautifully photographed. The story is dramatic, logical, without sentimentality.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes — **Children, 8 to 12** Exciting

◇

THANK YOU, JEEVES

Arthur Treacher, Virginia Field, David Niven. From a story by P. G. Wodehouse. Direction by Arthur Greville Collins. Twentieth Century-Fox.

Wodehouse fans will hail this comedy of the inimitable *Jeeves* and his master, *Bertie*. It has a characteristically Wodehousian plot, in which *Jeeves* struggles to save his impressionable master from the clutches of an adventuress. The story sets a rapid pace from London fog to a country hotel. The acting is uniformly excellent. The director has given the production pace, and has handled the comedy situations competently. The picture is entertaining farce-comedy, well presented.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes — **Children, 8 to 12** Yes

◇

THEY MET IN A TAXI

Chester Morris, Fay Wray, Lionel Stander. From a story by Octavus Roy Cohen. Direction by Alfred E. Green. Columbia.

The romance of a handsome young Irish cab driver and a beautiful model is no novelty, even when mislaid or stolen jewels are added to the plot. A threadbare story is provided with sparkling dialogue and humor to make hilarious comedy. It is well acted and well directed. The story moves along at a rapid pace and is pleasant light entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes — **Children, 8 to 12** No interest

◇

THREE MARRIED MEN

Lynne Overman, William Frawley, Roscoe Karns, Mary Brian. Based on a story by Owen Davis, Sr. Direction by Eddie Buzzell. Paramount.

The adventures and embarrassments of newlyweds often form a basis for an amusing comedy. In the present case the story is treated as a farce. From older members of the two families the bridegroom receives an excessive amount of well-meant advice leading to many humorous situations. The cast is suitable and direction is good. The picture is amusing of its type, but the general atmosphere seems unwholesome.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Not recommended — **Children, 8 to 12** No interest

VALIANT IS THE WORD FOR CARRIE

Gladys George, Jackie Moran, Charlene Wyatt, Arline Judge, John Howard, Dudley Digges, Harry Carey. From the novel by Barry Benefield. Adaptation by Claude Binyon. Direction by Wesley Ruggles. Paramount.

As if in answer to the much discussed question—"What is proper screen material?"—here is novel and challenging subject matter in which a prostitute is made the sympathetic heroine of a picture. There is nothing in the treatment to offend good taste, and those who have read the novel will find that, with the exception of a change in the ending, the plot and spirit of the book have been retained. It is a moving portrayal of regeneration brought about through love for a little boy and for a little girl whom he champions. The first half of the picture is exceptionally well done. The latter half is not so engrossing. At first interest is focused upon the woman's character development and the intelligently outlined stages of her sacrifice and gradual return to social stability. When the children grow to maturity the plot, as in the book, becomes episodic, sensational and less plausible. Interest is shifted to the young man and to the events brought about by his morbid psychology. Gladys George is an arresting personality and plays her difficult role with sincerity and commanding artistry. Her change from radiant young womanhood to middle age is one of the most expert transitions which we have seen on the screen. The children are splendid, and Arline Judge is especially fine in the exacting character of the little girl now grown up. Casting throughout is very successful. Adaptation and direction avoid pitfalls of sentimentality and tactfully retain the vigorous and dramatic flavor of the original.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Unsuitable — **Children, 8 to 12** No

◇

WEDDING PRESENT

Joan Bennett, Cary Grant, Conrad Nagel. Original story by Paul Gallico. Direction by Richard Wallace. Paramount-Schulberg.

A romance between two young newspaper reporters is the theme of this comedy. It is hilarious and fast moving, but verges on slapstick at times. The acting is excellent and the direction has maintained a rapid pace throughout a highly improbable story. The production is not in the best of taste on account of its reliance on practical jokes for its humor, but will entertain those who are not too critical.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Not recommended — **Children, 8 to 12** Mature

◇

WITHOUT ORDERS

Sally Eilers, Robert Armstrong, Frances Sage, Charlie Grapewin. From a story by Peter B. Kyne. Direction by Lew Landers. R. K. O.

The long suffering airlines are again given bad publicity in this film in which pilots drink to excess, a plane comes down in flames, a boy jumps off without benefit of parachute, and an air hostess nonchalantly takes over the controls on a difficult mountain route. The photography is very fine indeed, and there is no dearth of action, however improbable it may seem.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Questionable — **Children, 8 to 12** No

◇

WIVES NEVER KNOW

Charles Ruggles, Mary Boland, Adolph Menjou. Based on a story by Keene Thompson. Directed by Elliott Nugent. Paramount.

As *Homer* and *Marcia Bigelow*, Charles Ruggles and Mary Boland give another of their highly amusing portrayals of Mr. and Mrs. Average Citizen. Having been happily married for fifteen years and well established in the social circles of their community, they give a dinner for the author of "Marriage, the Living Death." In endeavoring to carry out this celebrity's ill-considered advice upon the subject of matrimony, they very nearly break up housekeeping. Considering the plot, the picture is handled without vulgarity. It is an amusing farce lampooning pseudo-Freudian literature, and making the most of the absurd situations that arise when a silly wife tries to remodel her domesticated husband.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Unsuitable material — **Children, 8 to 12** No

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LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

NOVEMBER, 1936

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Feature Films Reviewed In This Issue

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The Big Game
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*Four Days Wonder
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The Magnificent Brute
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*Pigskin Parade
*Sing Me a Love Song
Tarzan Escapes
The Smartest Girl In Town
Three Men On a Horse
*Tundra
*Under Your Spell
We Who Are About To Die
*Wild Brian Kent

*Film suitable for family entertainment but not necessarily appropriate for children under 12 or for children unaccompanied by adults.

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MOTION • PICTURE • REVIEWS

Published monthly by
THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB
LOS ANGELES BRANCH
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

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10c Per Copy - - $1.00 Per Year

Vol. X NOVEMBER 1936 No. 5

EDITORIAL

Hollywood, the home of the movies! Hollywood, the city where nine women's organizations preview feature films and send unbiased opinions out over the United States and Canada. In Hollywood, the least cooperative Better Films Committee in the country exists (according to the Producers and Exhibitors of that city). Such a situation is not one of which anyone should be proud. There must be a reason. There is.

In the days of the silent movie, even before any scientific studies had been made of the effect of motion pictures on audiences and particularly on children's attitudes, behavior problems and physical well being, Los Angeles and neighboring cities had started a movement for cooperation between parents, teachers and theatre managers to assure one children's day at the theatres. With no assistance from the producers of films, exhibitors and film exchanges asked approval of their bookings from the organized women, gave them first-run passes to allow them to pass judgment on the new pictures, ran special previews on others which they thought children might enjoy. They rearranged bookings, bought substitute films for Saturday matinees, eliminated advertising on future films and showed sincerely and wholeheartedly their belief in the women's single purpose of sponsoring and helping them in a social problem. The movement grew until it seemed that nothing could ever break down this mutual understanding and good feeling.

Then, over night came the "talkies"! With this innovation came at first a dearth of films which children could understand intelligently or from which they could gain any wholesome reaction. In the confusion of selecting suitable film material, sophistication, too much dialogue, too little action excluded child audiences. Both exhibitors and organized women, loathe to give up their ideal, were struggling valiantly when into the picture came the last barrier—the double feature. And from the offices higher up come the order—"Two or nothing—cut the expense of extra films—the adults, not the children are to be catered to." And one by one the faithful managers gave up, were dismissed or were moved to houses where the junior matinee had never been a local project.

Today in Southern California there are no active, successful Better Films Committees if accomplishments for children's entertainment is a criterion. But, the theaters still cater to children. In many instances they put on a "junior matinee" at which an hour of shorts preceeds the double feature. They add a serial. Last week a chain theatre offered a card advertising a new serial to open the following Saturday. Places for thirteen punches offered opportunity for a child with perfect weekly attendance to win a free seat at the opening of the next serial three months hence. At times they offer door prizes. Free candy is sometimes a lure. No order or discipline is required. No effective chaperonage is encouraged. The theatres want children. At least they

want the dimes, and they are willing to keep them four hours to get those dimes. It must pay to clean up the house afterward. If the theatre is not damaged beyond repair, it must pay to have the children come.

But the women have not given up. Their ideal is only set ahead. They see a future where the education of today will be effective tomorrow or next year and after. They are backing the teaching of film appreciation in the schools. In advanced progressive teaching, even primary grades discuss the films they see, while the study is an accomplished addition to the curricula of many high schools and junior high schools. Junior reviewing committees publish excellent critiques on current films in New York. This group of the National Board of Review does outstanding work. Behind me is the first supplement of a committee of the John Burroughs Junior High School of Los Angeles of which the student body may be justly proud. And these are not isolated examples. A number of schools have encouraged this form of critical expression for several years.

Edwin Schallert, critic on the Los Angeles Times, recently wrote a column concerning the "uprising of motion picture audiences against the policy of double billing pictures" which "hovers as a new menace, causing theatrical managers to sit up nights and scratch their heads worrying over this sudden manifestation of revolt on the part of film fans." He says that managers "deem it just a freakish disturbance," or a "display of mob emotion due to the excessive length of shows," to the inferior product, the lack of short subjects, to the fact that rarely are two features equally suitable for family entertainment. Another fact is that the better feature is always run at six or six-thirty p. m. and again after ten. It is impossible to see the popular picture at any time at which normal people who used to enjoy the movies care to attend. The pleasure of movies was largely the hour after dinner, an hour or two of simple relaxation, early to bed, fresh for the next day's problems. In making the movies a part of sophisticated night life, the exhibitors have alienated a great potential audience. They are catering now only to those audiences which have no purse or taste for other diversions.

Mr. Shallert says the outburst against double bills is discounted by a major theatre chain in Los Angeles as "typical of a minority group of younger-set sophisticates who poke fun at anything old fashioned, and who go to the theatre to amuse themselves by so doing." (Who does not go for entertainment?) He continues: "The adolescent group in neighborhood houses does not reject the majority of the public's opinion."

We are not so sure of that last statement. In a recent survey on double billing reaching 1,000,000 persons, 80% were opposed to the practice. But let us assume that the adolescent viewpoint is unique. Are not the theatres overlooking something very important? To persons interested in the movies there is a pertinent, thought-provoking article in the October *Atlantic Monthly* by Gilbert Seldes entitled "The Quicksands of the Movies." He says that the habit of "going to the movies" still exists. That many persons ask, "What's playing?" only to avoid seeing a film twice. *But* he say the producers have failed to estimate the *younger generation* and that is where we as organized women pin our faith. He claims that the "popularity of movies will dwindle for this new potential audience." Already children will not miss their favorite serial adventure on the radio. Television is coming. What then? Even *now* children are the ones in the family who say, "What is playing? *I* want to see a special film—not just any movie." Parents are filling their children's Saturdays with organized outings. In better neighborhoods the movies as a weekly diversion is "not the thing." Going to the movies was an automatic habit of the *past* generation. *What of the next?*

And so if Los Angeles is not a white spot among the three hundred or more Better Film Groups of the country, there is a reason. We will work to call attention to any fine production, but no one should cavil when women's groups feel that they have been "let down" by exhibitors, and that they are suspicious of any too direct "cooperation." —L. O. V.

Articles of Interest—

The Quicksands of the Movies.....Gilbert Seldes—*Atlantic Monthly*—October 1936

What's Ahead in the Movies.....Agnes Benedict—*Parents' Magazine*—September 1936

Movies for Minors.....*Literary Digest*—October 24, 1936

FEATURE FILMS

THE ACCUSING FINGER

Paul Kelly, Marsha Hunt, Kent Taylor, Robert Cummings. Direction by James Hogan. Paramount.

In a gruesome, realistically melodramatic film inveighing against capital punishment, we are shown an innocent man sent to the death house for murder, and his reactions as he faces the fatal hour. Nothing is omitted here that could harrow the feelings of the audience. The effort to prove that perpetrators of hideous and totally unpardonable crimes should not be executed by showing that the same punishment is sometimes meted out to the innocent, is so illogical as to be fantastic. Whether or not one believes in capital punishment, the treatment of the theme is dangerous in its influence upon impressionable minds.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Impossible — **Children, 8 to 12** Impossible

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ALONG CAME LOVE

Irene Hervey, Charles Starrett, Doris Kenyon, H. B. Warner, Irene Franklin, Bernadene Hayes, Ferdinand Gottschalk. Original screen play by Austin Strong. Direction by Bert Lytell. Paramount.

Emmy, a clerk in a department store, is influenced by her belief in astrology to scrape an acquaintance with a young man who looks like her idea of the Greek god Orion. The methods by which she attracts his notice and the ups and downs of their romance make a passably amusing photoplay.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes — **Children, 8 to 12** No interest

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THE BIG BROADCAST OF 1937

Jack Benny, George Burns, Gracie Allen, Bob Burns, Martha Raye, Shirley Ross. Benny Goodman and his orchestra. Leopold Stokowski and his symphony orchestra. Direction by Mitchell Leisen. Paramount.

The Big Broadcast is lively entertainment, full of laughs, amusing dialogue, songs, dancing and music, ranging in character from jazz to symphonic, with a slight story holding the many acts together rather less laboriously than is usual with this type of production. It pokes sly fun at broadcasting stations, at distraught managers, sponsors and temperamental performers, and the cast is admirably chosen for the different roles. Incidentally Martha Raye has at last a chance to display her eccentric talent to good advantage. Audiences may differ about the appearance of Mr. Stokowski in such a production, but his music comes in naturally in the business of the studio and the recording of his arrangements of Bach's *Fugue in G Minor* and an orchestrated prelude also by Bach are exquisite.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining — **Children, 8 to 12** Unobjectionable

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THE BIG GAME

Philip Huston, James Gleason, June Travis, Bruce Cabot, Frank M. Thomas. Based on a story by Francis Wallace. Direction by George Nicholls, Jr. R.K.O.

The perennial question of professionalism in college football has not been answered by this picture, which merely repeats the hackneyed story of the player who is offered a bribe, while the girl intervenes and saves the day. The cast is excellent, direction and photography are good, but the story is trite. The chief interest lies in the scenes of actual play, which will amuse many football devotees. It is unfortunate that football stories which might otherwise be good family entertainment are so often made unsuitable by the introduction of such objectionable elements as racketeers and gambling.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Ethically poor — **Children, 8 to 12** Poor

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BULLDOG EDITION

Regis Toomey, Evalyn Knapp, Ray Walker, Cy Kendall, Betty Compson. Direction by Charles Lamont. Republic.

A racketeer makes use of the rivalry between two newspapers for his own purposes of revenge and hatred, and the press story is overshadowed throughout by sinister gangster figures. While the swift change of events holds interest as in most of these films, it is improbable melodrama, a second-rate picture.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No — **Children, 8 to 12** No

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CALIFORNIA MAIL

Dick Foran, Linda Perry, Ed Cobb. Direction by Noel Smith. Warner Bros.

Combined with fine outdoor scenes and spirited action, one finds the naive conversations and overdone melodrama which were prevalent in earlier pictures of this type. It is a tale of the period when mail contracts were awarded to stage coach lines in place of the pony express. High lights of the film are Dick Foran's singing, the performance of his beautiful palomino horse and the stirring race of the stage coaches over a dangerous course. The picture is marred for children by the use of a splendid horse in the cruel destruction of his master's enemies.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Debatable — **Children, 8 to 12** No

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

Errol Flynn, Olivia de Havilland, Patric Knowles, Henry Stephenson, Nigel Bruce, Gerald Crisp, C. Henry Gordon, Robert Barrat, Spring Byington. Suggested by Tennyson's poem. Screen play by Michael Jacoby and Rowland Leight. Music by Max Steiner. Photography by Sol Polito. Direction by Michael Curtiz. Warner Bros.

Technically "The Charge of the Light Brigade" is a stunning picture, beautifully photographed, fast moving, admirably cast and accompanied by an exceptionally fine musical score. It portrays the British Colonial soldier with all the traditional ceremony, glory and sacrifice in service and brilliance of trappings with which we associate him. A caption states that the story is fictionized, also all the characters, with one or two exceptions. There is a love theme, but interest is primarily centered in border warfare. The inexplicable order which sent six hundred Lancers into the Russian cannon fire is attributed in the film story to the unauthorized action of an officer who reversed the original order to retreat, because he and his company of Lancers wished to wreak personal vengeance upon Surat Kahn (then fighting on the side of the Russians) for the massacre of English women and children several years before. The entire film is superbly dramatic. For sheer sensationalism the final charge of the brigade has never been equaled in pictures. Accompanied by stunning martial music, pounding hoofs, yells, cannon and fire, the mounted horsemen dash forward to complete destruction. The sequence runs fifteen minutes, and the scenes of carnage are unbearably realistic. At this time of international unrest and mutual suspicion the social value of such a picture is debatable. The savagery of the fighting, the horror of the massacre (after a true had been offered and accepted), arouse not only excitement in the spectators, but also actual mad emotions of hatred and lust for killing. The production glorifies war, makes revenge the motive for the final sacrifice, vindicates insubordination. As a bit of warklike realism it cannot be beaten. Its interpretation will depend upon the individual.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Very poor — **Children, 8 to 12** Impossible

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EAST MEETS WEST

George Arliss, Lucie Mennheim, Godfrey Tearle, Ronney Bent, Ralph Truman. Adapted from a novel by E. Greenwood. Direction by Herbert Mason. Gaumont-British.

This is not one of George Arliss' better vehicles. It is sensational melodrama in which the star represents a suave, cunning Eastern Rajah who has a harbor which Japan and England both want for military reasons. The unsavory marital relations of an English scoundrel and his wife are a prominent part of the plot, and smuggling of liquor to the natives brings about the unpleasant and unconvincing denouement.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Not recommended — **Children, 8 to 12** No

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FOUR DAYS WONDER

Jean Dante, Kenneth Howell, Martha Sleeper, Alan Mowbray, Walter Catlett. From the novel by A. A. Milne. Screen play by Harvey Thew and Michael Urif. Direction by Sidney Salkow. Universal.

The quality of A. A. Milne's imagination is difficult to transfer to the screen. The story of a young girl wrongly suspected of murder develops into a comedy of errors, culminating in a youthful romance. The actors are sufficiently successful in their interpretation of their roles, but the director has at times overstressed the action, losing the light touch required by the story. While no great heights of comedy are reached, the picture is agreeably entertaining.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes — **Children, 8 to 12** Mature

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FUGITIVE IN THE SKY

Jean Muir, Warren Hull, Gordon Oliver, Carlyle Moore, Jr., Howard Phillips, Winifred Shaw, Mary Treen, John Litel. Original story and screen play by George Bricker. Direction by Nick Grinde. Warner Bros.

The cabin of a great air liner is becoming a customary locale for a murder mystery. Opportunities for scenic photography and the thrills of flight are made the most of in this melodrama. The sequence showing the plane fighting its way through a dust storm is thrilling and beautifully photographed. Unfortunately the story does not live up to its setting, as there are too many characters, and the plot is involved and illogical. The actors are capable if not outstanding.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No — **Children, 8 to 12** No

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HOPALONG CASSIDY RETURNS

William Boyd, Evelyn Brent, George Hayes, Wm. Janney, Jr., Morris Ankrum. Direction by Nate Watt. Photography by Archie Stout. Harry Sherman—Paramount.

Those who enjoy Westerns will find the latest of the Hopalong Cassidy series much to their taste with its dash and swing, excellent riding, straight-shooting and one of the best of the frontier heroes, William Boyd. These films boast better direction with fewer hitches in action, then most of their kind. The theme of this one is as old as the Western itself: the

overthrow of the denizens of a dance hall-gambling establishment by the forces of law and order with the wicked female ringleader professing remorse because of her love for an upright man. There is one scene which will bring shudders to many, the spectacle of an invalid dragged to his death in a wheel-chair. Such an exhibition of wanton cruelty is unnecessary and to be deplored, especially in a picture which will attract junior audiences.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Questionable — **Children, 8 to 12** No

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LADIES IN LOVE

Janet Gaynor, Loretta Young, Constance Bennett, Simone Simon, Don Ameche, Paul Lucas, Tyrone Power, Jr., Alan Mowbray. Based on the play by Ladislaus Bus-Fekete. Direction by Edward H. Griffith. 20th Century-Fox.

There is a line of Galsworthy to the effect that what one most greatly desires determines the course of one's life. So in this semi-sophisticated Continental romance, wherein the hearts of two little working girls are badly nicked if not entirely broken, a third girl whose wish was for true love and a modest home, finds happiness. The story is not very deep, but it is done in a charming manner with Loretta Young, Constance Bennett and Janet Gaynor as the three girls of widely differing temperaments, who for a time occupy the same apartment in Budapest. Simone Simon's role, a minor one, seems exaggerated. The men are well cast. Alan Mowbray contributes some delightful humor and an excellent characterization as the magician.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too mature — **Children, 8 to 12** No

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LIBELED LADY

Jean Harlow, William Powell, Myrna Loy, Spencer Tracy, Walter Connolly, Charley Grapewin, Cora Witherspoon. From the story by Wallace Sullivan. Screen play by Maurine Watkins, Howard Emmett Rogers and George Oppenheimer. Direction by Jack Conway. M-G-M.

To avoid the consequences of his paper's unauthenticated scandal mongering, a reporter and his friend set out to frame evidence which will make the heiress who has been maligned seem a legitimate target for a damaging story. Their efforts involve them in a dizzy whirl of events including the fake marriage of one man to the shrewish fiancee of the other. No more preposterous concotion than "Libeled Lady" can be imagined, but its lively pace, its flippant rapid-fire dialogue, its ludicrous situations and the zest with which the cast enters into the spirit of the story make it unique in the school of sophisticated slapstick.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too sophisticated — **Children, 8 to 12** No

LOVE LETTERS OF A STAR

Henry Hunter, Polly Rowles, C. Henry Gordon, Walter Coy, Hobart Cavanaugh, Ralph Forbes. From the story "The Case of the Constant God" by Rufus King. Direction by Lewis R. Foster and Milton Carruth. Universal.

Audiences will be surprised to find a detective story hiding under a misleading title. The blackmail theme, dealing with love letters written by a woman to a former matinee idol, vanishes with the suicide of the lady. The plot develops into a murder mystery, with gangsters, a master detective, and other trappings of a modern crime story. The result is a somewhat confused but interesting melodrama.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Mature — **Children, 8 to 12** No

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THE LUCKIEST GIRL IN THE WORLD

Jane Wyatt, Louie Hayward, Nat Pendleton, Eugene Palette, Catherine Doucet, Phillip Reed, Viola Callahan. From the Ladies Home Journal story, "Kitchen Privileges" by Anne Jordan. Direction by Edward Buzzell. Universal.

Testing her ability to live on one hundred and fifty dollars a month, *Patricia Duncan,* an heiress, encounters a number of odd adventures and finds a husband. Nat Pendleton as the young lady's bodyguard, who has been hired by her father to protect her, is responsible for a portion of the comedy, while both romance and comedy appear when *Patricia* endeavors to accommodate herself to sharing "kitchen privileges" with a young man. The plot is well handled, and the characters seem delightfully human.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Entertaining — **Children, 8 to 12** No interest

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THE MAGNIFICENT BRUTE

Victor McLaglen, Binnie Barnes, Billy Burrud. Based on the Liberty Magazine story "Big" by Owen Francis. Direction by John G. Blystone. Universal.

An open hearth steel mill is an unusual background for a motion picture, although it has been used many times in fiction. The story in this case is weak and sordid with little humor or character development to relieve its tragic events. The sequences depicting the manufacture of steel are interesting, but there are several unnecessarily harrowing scenes. Though acting and direction are adequate the dialogue is trite and what comedy relief there is depends upon "wisecracks."

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Harrowing — **Children, 8 to 12** Certainly not

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THE MAN I MARRY

Doris Nolan, Michael Whalen, Chic Sale, Nigel Bruce, Skeets Gallagher. Direction by Ralph Murphy. Universal.

The vain struggle of a woman-hater to prevent himself from falling in love is ever an amusing sight for movie audiences. A young playwright who has a phobia against feminine interference in his life is eventually charmed by a persistent lady. With the exception of a mildly boring pair of supposedly intoxicated comedians, this is a pleasantly diverting film.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 — Possibly entertaining
Children, 8 to 12 — No interest

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PIGSKIN PARADE

Stuart Erwin, Patsy Kelly, Jack Haley, Johnny Downs, Betty Grable, Arline Judge. Based on a story by Arthur Sheekman, Nat Perrin, and Mark Kelly. Direction by David Butler. 20th Century-Fox.

It may be desecration to burlesque the great game of football, particularly in this season of the year. When Yale by mistake invites the wrong university from Texas to play a charity game on Armistice Day, a farce quickly develops. The wife of the Texas coach runs the team and works out the plays. She drafts half the basketball team and smuggles into the lineup an individual who insists upon playing in his bare feet. The game is won in the last minute of play on a snowy field. A romance, a little horseplay, and some musical numbers by the popular Yacht Club Boys serve as relief to the football atmosphere. It is unfortunate that many characters in Hollywood campus stories bear so little resemblance to collegians. The best part of the picture is the game played in the snow.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 — Yes
Children, 8 to 12 — Mature

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SING ME A LOVE SONG

James Melton, Patricia Ellis, Hugh Herbert, ZaSu Pitts, Allen Jenkins, Walter Catlett. Original story by Harry Sauber. Direction by Raymond Enright. First National.

The theme of a carefree young man inheriting a department store and making good under the pressure of responsibility is not new, but this fact does not eliminate spontaneity from the picture. The settings in the various sections of the store make interesting and attractive backgrounds. James Melton sings very well indeed, and he is not niggardly in displaying his talents. It is the absurd comedy however which really carried the show. Seldom does one see such delightful nonsense as Hugh Herbert's pantomime in the part of *Hammershlag,* the shoplifter, while Walter Catlett as the floorwalker and ZaSu Pitts as the salesgirl who just cannot refrain from breaking things add substantially to the fun.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 — Good
Children, 8 to 12 — Yes

THE SMARTEST GIRL IN TOWN

Gene Raymond, Ann Sothern, Helen Broderick, Eric Blore. Story by Muriel Scheck and H. S. Kraft. Direction by Joseph Santley. R.K.O.

A frothy play, utilizing the ancient yet dependable situation of the millionaire playboy in pursuit of the pretty, sophisticated working-girl, is saved from banality by clever dialogue and spontaneous acting. Some of the best moments may be credited to Eric Blore, who seldom fails to make minor parts effective. As the valet, he is the mainstay of his employer, when the fortune-hunting heroine, unaware of her suitor's identity, tries to elude him.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 — Possible
Children, 8 to 12 — No

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THREE MEN ON A HORSE

Frank McHugh, Joan Blondell, Guy Kibbee, Carol Hughes, Allen Jenkins. From the play by John Cecil Holm and George Abbott. Direction by Mervyn LeRoy. First National.

This is the rollicking stage play, which is equally mirth-provoking on the screen, with its free-for-all comedy and pungent dialogue. The hero is a quiet, inoffensive rhymster of greeting cards, who has an uncanny gift for picking winners on the racetrack without ever placing a bet. He is discovered by three professional turfmen who imprison him in a hotel room and capitalize on his intuitions, while his distracted wife waits at home. It is somewhat rough and alcoholic as the theme implies; men will enjoy it most.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 — Better not
Children, 8 to 12 — No

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TUNDRA, A SAGA OF THE ALASKAN WILDERNESS

Del Cambra. Story by Norman Dawn. Adaption by Charles F. Royal. Director—Norman Dawn. Producer—George Stout. Distributed by Burroughs-Tarzan Pictures, Inc.

There is beautiful photography in this picture, and deft use is made of the wild-life and many of the usual properties of the frozen northland. Taking as its background one of the places of earth that still possesses glamour and the possibility of thrilling adventure, the picture gets away to a fine start. But the story fails to live up to the grandeur of the setting. The continuity could have been better handled, and in moments of crisis the emotional effect is marred by insensitive handling of incident and by uninspired acting. As a story it is mediocre, but as a picture of the Alaskan tundra it is excellent entertainment which the family will enjoy and which children will hail with delight because of fascinating closeups of Arctic animals.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 — Yes
Children, 8 to 12 — Yes

WE WHO ARE ABOUT TO DIE

Preston Foster, Ann Dvorak, John Beal. From the novel by David Lamson. Screen play by John Twist. Direction by Christy Cabanne. An Edward Small production. R.K.O.

While to create emotional appeal in this picture there is a moving story of an innocent man sentenced to death through circumstantial evidence, the particular appeal is in the psychology of the inmates of a prison, especially those on "death row." This phase is very well handled photographically and by direction, acting and script. The plot in no way suggests the experiences resulting in conviction of the author of the book; in fact the book itself was concerned with the reactions of the men incarcerated in prison, and the picture follows the spirit of the original. It raises the question of the rectitude of capital punishment and the possibility of the miscarriage of justice through red tape and politics, but it avoids sentimentality and becomes an important analysis of actual conditions and the psychology of those unfortunates who, through some social maladjustment, have been convicted of a major crime. The film is unique in that the prison scenes seem more realistic and true than those in other films on the subject. They are immensely powerful and the production should have great interest for adult audiences.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No: too emotional

Children, 8 to 12 No

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WILD BRIAN KENT

Ralph Bellamy, Mae Clarke, Helen Lowell. Based on the novel "The Re-Creation of Brian Kent" by Harold Bell Wright. Screen play and adaption by James Gruen & Earle Snell. Directed by Howard Bretherton. 20th Century-Fox.

Brian Kent, having lost his money at cards, retires to rural scenes and becomes interested in a poor family who are being persecuted by a group of unscrupulous crooks in the effort to gain possession of their home. *Kent,* as a god from the machine, routs the villains and marries the girl. In the picture there are no outstanding scenes or dramatic incidents. The only appeal is to those who are interested in seeing a typical Harold Bell Wright story on the screen.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Passable

Children, 8 to 12 No interest

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THE GARDEN OF ALLAH

In Technicolor. Marlene Dietrich. Charles Boyer, Basil Rathbone, C. Aubrey Smith, Tilly Losch, Joseph Schildkraut, Alan Marshall, Lucile Watson. From the novel by Robert Hichens. Adapted by W. P. Lipscomb and Lynn Riggs. Photography by W. Howard Greene. Direction by Richard Boleslawski. Musical effects by Max Steiner. David O. Selznick, producer. United Artists.

Color photography has never appeared to greater advantage than in this picture in which vast expanse of golden desert, blue sky and flaming sunsets produce lovely pictorial backgrounds for the romantic action. The realistic effects are very beautiful, and the costumes of the natives and the varied hues of the flowing robes of Miss Dietrich blend in exquisite harmony with the settings. In fact, it is color which attracts greatest interest to the production. The story is dated. Twenty years ago it seemed daring romance. Today, audiences may find it difficult to be emotionally stirred because a Trappist monk breaks his vows, ventures into the world, samples its joys and then returns to the monastery for penance. The desert idyll is too far removed from modern life to seem real or important. Charles Boyer has a role in which an harassed conscience makes him constantly serious and darkly introspective. Miss Dietrich photographs to advantage in the medium, but a more emotional actress might have made the plot seem more vital. Joseph Schildkraut as *Batouch* furnishes gay relief from the tragic action. Basil Rathbone, C. Aubrey Smith and Lucile Watson are exceptionally fine in important roles and Tilly Losch is impressive as a nautch girl. The musical accompaniment is noticeably good.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No value

Children, 8 to 12 No

UNDER YOUR SPELL

Lawrence Tibbett, Wendy Barrie, Arthur Treacher, Gregory Ratoff. Screen play by Frances Hyland and Saul Elkins, based upon stories by Bernice Mason and Sy Bartlett. Music and lyrics by Arthur Schwartz and Howard Dietz. Direction by Ludwig Preminger. 20th Century-Fox.

When a cowboy becomes a famous singer, he naturally grows restive under the strict discipline enforced by his manager. He finally rebels after he has been obliged to endorse mattresses and cigarettes. The last straw is a contract for him to sing at a private house, to further the social aspirations of a spoiled society girl. The singer, accompanied by his faithful valet, decamps for his old home in New Mexico. This setting affords the motive for several charming songs including "Amigo" and "My Little Mule Wagon." Mr. Tibbett's voice was never better, and he shows definite talent as a comedian. He offers only one operatic selection but is most generous with songs in lighter vein. The remainder of the cast is excellent. Arthur Treacher as the valet, Gregory Ratoff as the manager, and Wendy Barrie as the society girl, are responsible for much of the amusement. Direction and photography are very good, the comedy borders upon farce at times, and the dialogue is crisp and sparkling. The film is one of the best of the musical productions, perhaps because it is not overloaded by operatic selections, so often dragged in to display the singer's virtuosity. It is a simple romantic comedy, full of humor and charming music.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Yes

TARZAN ESCAPES

Johnny Weismuller, Maureen O'Sullivan, John Buckler, Benita Hume, William Henry. Based on the stories by Edgar Rice Burroughs. Direction by Richard Thorpe. M-G-M.

When a young woman and her brother go to the wilds of Africa to search for their cousin, they find her living with *Tarzan,* the "white ape." Adventures with hostile natives, a villainous hunter who tries to capture *Tarzan,* follow the usual Burroughs formula. Johnny Weismuller's acting is good, and the remainder of the cast give him adequate support. In a picture of this kind which uses an extremely fantastic plot and an impossible hero, it seems a pity that the producers should introduce the shocking realism of death scenes, vividly pictured in all their horrid details. As either fairy stories or adventure tales the *Tarzan* books have a large following of children and adults who like to be transported out of the world of reality by swift action and imaginative events, but the thrills of *Tarzan's* amazing feats do not need actual horror to increase their appeal. Several scenes in this picture unfit it for the audiences with which it should have the greatest popularity.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Not recommended

Children, 8 to 12 No

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LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

DECEMBER, 1936

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*Can This Be Dixie
Career Woman
*Charlie Chan at the Opera
*Come and Get It
*Easy to Take
15 Maiden Lane
*Flying Hostess
Go West, Young Man
Hideaway Girl
*King of Hockey
*Laughing at Trouble
*Lloyds of London
Mad Holiday
*Make Way for a Lady
The Man Who Lived Twice
The Plot Thickens
The President's Mystery
Reunion
*Rose Bowl
Smart Blonde
Theodora Goes Wild
*Wanted: Jane Turner
Winterset
A Woman Rebels

*Film suitable for family entertainment but not necessarily appropriate for children under 12 or for children unaccompanied by adults.

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LOS ANGELES BRANCH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN
943 South Hoover Street • Telephone DRexel 2022
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MOTION • PICTURE • REVIEWS

Published monthly by

THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB

LOS ANGELES BRANCH

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Address all communications to
The Women's University Club, 943 So. Hoover St., Los Angeles, Calif.

10c Per Copy - - $1.00 Per Year

Vol. X **DECEMBER 1936** **No. 6**

FEATURE FILMS

CAN THIS BE DIXIE

Jane Withers, Slim Summerville, Helen Wood, Thomas Beck, Sara Haden, Claude Gillingwater, Donald Cook.

Jane Withers, who is a good little actress in her own right, receives a severe handicap when she is cast in a play which is patently an imitation of a Shirley Temple vehicle, Kentucky Colonel, tap dancing, negro singing and all. It is a poor imitation at that. The plot is hackneyed from three different angles: the imminent mortgage foreclosure, the race-horse which is to restore the family fortunes and the group of performers who succeed in a radio amateur hour. Considered as a revue, its includes several good numbers, some snappy songs and dances, particularly by the colored actors, and some good ensembles in the cotton fields and the old plantation house.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fair

Children, 8 to 12 Little interest and one scene which might cause alarm

• • •

CAREER WOMAN

Claire Thevor, Michael Whelen, Isabel Jewell, Eric Linden. Direction by Lewis Seiler. 20th entury-Fox.

The thesis that cases are won in court by histrionics, not logic, is awkwardly advanced in this story of a young woman lawyer and a hard-boiled attorney who is in love with her. When the girl is defending a client in her small town home, the city lawyer bursts into the court room and announces that he is her colleague. The melodrama which follows would not be tolerated in any court. If the story were done with more subtlety it might pass as satire, but it falls far short of this classification. It can only cheapen courts in the minds of the audience, and with its absurdities rob the law of its proper dignity.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No

Children, 8 to 12 No

• • •

CHARLIE CHAN AT THE OPERA

Warner Oland, Boris Karloff, Keye Luke, Charlotte Henry, Thomas Beck, Margaret Irving, Gregory Gaye. Story by Meredyth. Screen play by Scott Darling and Charles S. Belden. Direction by H. Bruce Humberstone. 20th Century-Fox.

Mr. Biggers and Mr. Oland have created a distinctly human character in Charlie Chan, who sems a real person, not dependent on oriental makeup or the novel idea that a

Chinese could be a detective. When a beautiful prima donna is murdered in full sight of the audience while she sings in opera, *Charlie* steps in and solves the mystery with his customary Oriental subtlety. Some good singing during the performance of the opera adds to the entertainment.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes
Children, 8 to 12 No interest

• • •

COME AND GET IT

Edward Arnold, Joel McCrea, Frances Farmer, Walter Brennan, Andrea Leeds, Frank Shields, Mady Christians, Mary Nash. From the novel by Edna Ferber. Direction by Howard Hawks and William Wyler. Samuel Goldwyn.

Lumbering operations in the snow of the north woods have been photographed as never before in this picture. We see the awe-inspiring fall of a mighty tree, the use of dynamite to loosen frozen piles of "decked" logs, soon to be sent rushing down a flume to dive into the river far below. The rough life of the lumber camps goes on to the stentorian mess-call, "Come and Get It." Edward Arnold as *Barney Glasgok* is a burly woodsman who fights and schemes his way to dominance in the lumber industry but sacrifices his personal happiness to his ambitions. As in most of Miss Ferber's stories, the plot is obvious, even trite, but the characterizations are extraordinarily well done. Romantic interest centers about Frances Farmer in an appealing dual role. Walter Brennan is excellent in the role of *Swan Bostrom, Barney's* loyal Swedish friend. The part of the picture dealing with life in a saw-mill town thirty and more years ago, is distinctly a novelty, and the scenic effects are magnificent.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Mature but interesting
Children, 8 to 12 No

• • •

EASY TO TAKE

Marsha Hunt, John Howard, Eugene Pallette, Douglas Scott, Jan Duggan. Story by Wayne Kilbourne. Direction by Glenn Tryon. Paramount.

A young man who loathes his job of uttering platitudes in dulcet tones to his radio "nephews" and "nieces," is tendered the guardianship of an incorrigible boy of eleven. With John Howard as the personable *Uncle Roddy,* Marsha Hunt as the center of romance and Jan Duggan as a relative who is a priceless example of Mid-Victorianism, the film is off to a very good start. It deteriorates quickly, however, and the longest sequence is devoted to the exploitation of a swarm of children in a radio program which will amuse some, bore many and thoroughly disgust the remainder of the audience. A story with a spark of originality is held to the pace of a jog-trotting program picture.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Fair
Children, 8 to 12 Not very good

• • •

15 MAIDEN LANE

Clare Trevor, Cesar Romero, Douglas Fowley. Based on a story by Paul Burger. Screen play by Lou Breslow and John Patrick. Direction by Allan Dwan. 20 Century-Fox.

In order to catch the leaders of a ring of jewel thieves, and for the sport of the adventure, the attractive niece of the head of an insurance company pretends that she herself is a thief. Not a new theme, this, not even a new treatment, but very well done by the competent cast. The picture runs smoothly and the filming is artistic. Though dealing with what might be termed the "four hundred" in the world of crime rings, the story does not make underworld characters glamorous. Thieves who seem to be the gentlemen bandit type in the beginning turn out to be completely ruthless, and their true characters are not glossed over with sentiment when their veneer wears off. There is plenty of excitement as the story moves quickly from one startling incident to another. The film is a better than average detective tale.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Not recommended
Children, 8 to 12 No

• • •

FLYING HOSTESS

William Gargan, Judith Barrett, William Hall, Astrid Allwyn, Andy Devine, Ella Logan. Original story by George Sayre. Direction by Murray Roth. Universal.

To the making of airplane pictures there is no end, but the theme of the brave air hostess who grounds the plane after the pilots have been injured seems in danger of being done to death. However, in the present version there is such irresistible lure in the thrilling action and so much of the refreshing audacity of youth, that the producers may be pardoned for serving an old plot again. The actors play their roles with enthusiasm and evident enjoyment. Escaping bank robbers add to the melodrama, and a love interest relieves the tension. Details of the operation of the plane and the training required of an air hostess lend authenticity to a picture that holds breathless interest throughout. In fact, sufferers from high blood pressure would be wise to leave when the hostess takes the controls to land the plane in a fog.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes
Children, 8 to 12 Exciting and mature

GO WEST YOUNG MAN

Mae West, Warren William, Randolph Scott, Lyle Talbot, Alice Brady, Isabell Jewell, Elizabeth Patterson. Screen play and dialogue by Mae West. Direction by Henry Hathaway. Paramount.

A highly publicized screen star is finishing a personal appearance tour and fretting under the vigilance of a manager, whose job is to keep her from marrying for five years. An automobile breakdown lands the touring group in a secluded country hotel, where the actress is attracted to a young mechanic. She is about to succeed in inducing him to accompany her to Hollywood when clever work on the part of the manager and the young man's friends saves the situation and temporarily appeases the tempestous star. Though the lines are not blatantly objectionable, the material and the way it is handled class the picture as the sort of sophisticated comedy in which Miss West is expected to appear.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No — **Children, 8 to 12** No

• • •

HIDEAWAY GIRL

Robert Cummings, Shirley Ross, Martha Raye, Wilma Francis, Louis DaPron, Elizabeth Russell, Monroe Owsley. Based on a story by David Garth. Direction by George Archainbaud. Paramount.

The spectacle of a girl in wedding gown and veil, fleeing in a car from pursuing police, is a piquant introduction to an atrocious bit of musical slapstick. A gang of international thieves, headed by a bogus count, take up the chase in search of a stolen necklace. The girl hides on a yacht owned by a millionaire playboy. Misunderstandings and unconventional situations soon arise. With such a background ample opportunity is given the energetic Miss Raye to indulge in her peculiar style of humor. Musical numbers are sometimes tuneful, but usually too noisy. There is little dialogue, as the story is told chiefly in rapid-fire action. The production is loud and raucous to the point of vulgarity.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No — **Children, 8 to 12** No

• • •

KING OF HOCKEY

Dick Purcell, Anne Nagel, Marie Wilson, Mayne Morris, Ann Gilles. Screen play by George Bricker. Direction by Noel Smith. Warner Bros.-First National.

Sport as the *raison d'etre* of a picture is with us again, in this case hockey, which is more difficult to follow than football but has dash and rythm and fierce encounters. *Gabby Dugan,* a young college player, joins a professional team, and between the meddling of gamblers and his rash behavior to attract the attention of a charming young spectator named *Kathleen,* he is soon in serious trouble. The story is simply and logically told, cast is suitable and direction is good, especially in the treatment of the game.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes — **Children, 8 to 12** Too mature a plot

• • •

LAUGHING AT TROUBLE

Jane Darwell, Sara Haden, Lois Wilson, Margaret Hamilton, Delma Byron, Allan Lane, Pert Kelton, John Carradine. Direction by Frank R. Strayer. 20th Century-Fox.

A woman newspaper editor in a small town is the principal factor in obtaining a new trial for an innocent youth who has been convicted of the murder of his uncle. Among the various townspeople who enter into the story is an astute seamstress whose knowledge of everybody's affairs enables her to supply a clue to the solution of the crime. The picture is a welcome change from the usual sordid murder mystery. The leading characters are pleasant, normal people whose motives and personal relationships are an important and amusing part of the story.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes — **Children, 8 to 12** No

• • •

LLOYDS OF LONDON

Freddie Bartholomew, Madeleine Carroll, Sir Guy Standing, Tyrone Power, C. Aubey Smith, Virginia Field. Direction by Henry King. Daryl Zanuck in charge of production. 20th Century-Fox.

Historical romance at its best, whether in a novel or on the screen, is always one of the most satisfying forms of entertainment for, more than any other kind of fiction, it carries us further from our immediate problems without straining our credulity. "Lloyds of London" runs true to form and cunningly weaves fact and fiction into a thoroughly entertaining tale of love and adventure as experienced by *Jonathan Blake,* boyhood friend of Lord Nelson and associated throughout a critical time in English maritime history, with the great insurance house of Lloyds. Blake as a youth is played by Freddie Bartholomew whose sensitive interpretation of the part is largely responsible for the picture's auspicious bebinning. The boy goes to London on an exciting and Quixotic mission and there makes connections with the firm of Lloyds. *Jonathan,* the man, played by Tyrone Power, becomes the hub of thrilling events culminating when England's fate seems to hang upon *Blake's* patriotism and his loyalty to his friend Lord Nelson. Immensely interesting in every

detail are the scenes showing the interior of Lloyds Coffee Shop with the bell that rang "once for disaster and twice for good news," the auctioneer's candle with its wick pierced to stop the bidding when the flame went out, and the bulletin board whereon the important events of contemporary history were posted to be read for the first time by insurance brokers to whom news was the vital factor in their business. Though to some critics the casting of *Blake* and *Lady Elizabeth* may not seem ideal, their acting is excellent, and other parts are most felicitiously cast. The production offers far more than average films. Inherent in its theme are idealism and the appeal of youth rising by its own fine qualities to influence and fortune. It is an exhilarating picture.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Excellent
Children, 8 to 12 Beyond their comprehension

• • •

MAD HOLIDAY

Edmund Lowe, Elissa Landi, Zasu Pitts, Ted Healy, Edmund Gwen, Edgar Kennedy, Soo Young, Gustav von Seyffertitz. Suggested by the story "Murder In a Chinese Theatre," by Joseph Santley. Screen play by Florence and Edgar Allan Woolf. Direction by George B. Seitz. M-G-M.

A movie actor, weary of playing in murder mysteries, takes a sea voyage to get away from the monotony of his work. When he encounters on the ship the woman who has written most of his plays, the stage obviously is set for murders in real life, involving actor and author. The story is overloaded with the usual trappings of melodrama. A famous diamond, mysterious Orientals, a dope fiend and detectives appear and disappear while the scene shifts to San Francisco's Chinatown, and many murders are committed. The story is so involved and unreal that the actors could do little with it, and the direction is inadequate to make the story intelligible. Details of some of the murders are gruesome.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Poor
Children, 8 to 12 No

• • •

MAKE WAY FOR A LADY

Herbert Marshall, Anne Shirley, Gertrude Michael, Margot Graham. Screen play by Gertrude Purcell. Direction by David Burton. R.K.O.

Overhearing herself described as the obstacle of her father's remarriage, an adolescent girl takes it upon herself to conduct an experiment in match-making. She thereby stirs up a great deal of trouble for everyone until a happy inspiration shows her a way to repair the damage. Because of her youthful charm, Anne Shirely in the role of the interfering daughter is able to hold the sympathy of the audience. The small-town setting is lovely, and the story has a refreshingly human quality, nicely blended with sentiment and fun.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Yes
Children, 8 to 12 Mature

• • •

THE MAN WHO LIVED TWICE

Ralph Bellamy, Isabel Jewell, Ward Bond, Marion Marsh. Direction by Harry Lachman. Columbia.

The theme of the regeneration of a criminal by a brain operation is a distinct novelty in pictures, although familiar in literature. An escaped criminal, hearing that a doctor wishes a subject for an untried operation offers himself, and the operation eliminates his criminal tendencies as well as all memory of his past life. Though he later becomes a great scientist his past record is an ever present menace to his happiness. A love story is interwoven with the plot, but the chief interest is in the possibility of reforming criminals by surgery. Acting and direction are good, if not brilliant. The element of supense is maintained throughout, and the heavy intensity of the drama is unrelieved till the end.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No
Children, 8 to 12 No

• • •

THE PLOT THICKENS

James Gleason, Zasu Pitts, Owen Davis Jr., Louise Latimer, Arthur Aylesworth. From the story by Stuart Palmer. Screen play by Clarence Upson Young and Jack Townley. Direction by Ben Holmes. R.K.O.

Our British cousins might call it "a bit thick" when the servants commit murder in their rivalry over who shall have the use of the master's car. The story becomes a wild and ridiculous melodrama with several murders, secret panels and a stolen gem all involved. The famous comedy team of James Gleason and Zusu Pitts struggle valiantly to inject some humor into the proceedings, but the comedy is forced and unconvincing and in a story intended as a comedy the series of horrors is unnecessary. The director seems to have felt pressed for time, as the action is so rapid that the audience has little opportunity to pick up the threads of the plot.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No
Children, 8 to 12 No

• • •

THE PRESIDENT'S MYSTERY

Henry Wilcoxon, Betty Furness, Barnet Parker, Sydney Blackmer, Evelyn Brent. Conceived and suggested by Franklin D. Roosevelt. Story by Rupert Hughes and five other writers. Direction by Phil Rosen. M-G-M.

Economic propaganda is a new departure for American producers. Here it is mingled with murder and illicit love to form a strange concoction, thought provoking though not entirely convincing. The story deals with the conversation of a wealthy attorney to advocacy of the cooperative system when a book he has read, "The President's Mystery," has given him the vision of an unselfish life. The heroine, endeavoring to operate a cannery on a cooperative basis, encounters labor trouble, but the attorney who is her friend averts a crisis. Meanwhile a murder is committed and a complicated intrigue is disclosed. The picture attempts to show the beauty of regeneration by bringing happiness to others and advocates the attainment of social justice by legislation regulating production. The director has produced a fairly coherent film considering the involved plot and the large amount of material to be presented.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No; needs adult judgment

Children, 8 to 12 No

• • •

REUNION

The Dionne Quintuplets, Jean Hersholt, Dorothy Peterson, Michael Whalen, Rochelle Hudson, Esther Ralston. Direction by Norman Taurog. Screen play by Bruce Gould. 20th Century-Fox.

In "Reunion" a good idea has gone awry. The scheme of gathering together a motley crowd of human beings, all "babies" tended by one doctor, yet with divers complicated adult problems, which the doctor wisely solves, might have made a most interesting film. Handicapped by the necessity of providing a story that would make a good excuse for including the famous "quints," and yet carry enough "punch" to interest people who are not vulnerable to the charm of the five fascinating animated doll babies, the scenarists have created something that fails of both objectives. The humor is often forced and in bad taste. The problems of the adults who convene to celebrate the fact that a beloved country doctor had delivered his three thousandth baby are too sordid to mix well with the naive appeal of the headlined attractions. Jean Hersholt's personality and the really fine philosophy of the old doctor are the redeeming features of the film. Those who go to see the babies will be disappointed by the small amount of footage allotted to them.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Questionable

Children, 8 to 12 No

• • •

ROSE BOWL

William Frawley, Eleanore Whitney, Tom Brown, Larry Crabbe, Benny Baker. From the story by Francis Wallace. Direction by Charles Barton. Paramount.

We have been subjected to so many campus pictures with middle-aged men (because they can sing) and hard-boiled lassies (because they can dance) that it is a joy to find a film with fresh young people and scenes which attempt to portray college life with some authenticity. There are excellent football pictures of three separate games, culminating in the colorful contest at the Rose Bowl. Several tangled love affairs are straightened out to everyone's satisfaction, and there is always breezy under-graduate humor from the sidelines. It is an unpretentious picture which none the less manages to very good fun.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Good

Children, 8 to 12 Yes, if they like football

• • •

SMART BLONDE

Glenda Farrell, Barton MacLane, Winifred Shaw. From a story by Frederick Nobel. Screen play by Don Ryan and Kenneth Gamet. Direction by Frank McDonald. Warner Brothers.

A fast moving, wise cracking drama with Glenda Farrell as the ace newspaper reporter who always seems to be on the inside track. The story deals with the murder of a night club owner and the efforts of a G-man to catch the criminal. The film is a moderately interesting mystery, but has no particular distinction in direction or acting.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No

Children, 8 to 12 No interest

• • •

THEODORA GOES WILD

Irene Dunne, Melvyn Douglas, Spring Byington, Margaret McWade, Elizabeth Riston, Jed Waterbury, Henry Kolker. Story by Mary McCarthy. Direction by Richard Boleslawski. Columbia.

This is a rollicking farce, full of youth and laughter and impossible but intertaining situations. A small town girl, *Theodora,* who lives with two ultra-conservative aunts, writes under a nom de plume, a sensational best seller which the local newspaper editor publishes in serial form, greatly to the horror of the town's literary society. On a trip to her publisher, *Theodora* attracts the notice of a rather mad young man who follows her home and by means of engaging, blackmail tactics drives her to defy the village gossips. This is perhaps the most amusing part of the picture, but *Theodora's* subsequent attempts to live up to her reputation as the authoress of a scandalous novel make some very lively scenes. Irene Dunne and Melvyn Douglass handle their roles with a delightfully humorous touch.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too sophisticated

Children, 8 to 12 No

WANTED: JANE TURNER

Lee Tracy, Gloria Stuart, Judith Blake. Story by John Twist and Edmund L. Hartmann. Direction by Edward Killy. R.K.O.

This picture has a mystery detective plot concerning the investigation by postal G-men of a mail-truck robbery and involving a mistaken identity situation. It is interesting chiefly for local color supplied by the interior of a large post office and minor characters who call at the general delivery window. The cast is good, the picture average.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Passable **Children, 8 to 12** No

• • •

WINTERSET

Burgess Meredeth, Margo, John Carradine, Edwardo Cianelli, Edward Ellis, Paul Guilfoyle, Stanley Ridges, Maurice Moscovitch, Misha Auer, Willard Robertson, Helen Jerome Eddy, Barbara Pepper, Myron McCormick. From the play by Maxwell Anderson. Direction by Alfred Santell. R.K.O.

Hell's Kitchen, one of the most forlorn and evil seeming slums in the world, is the scene of this drama; its characters are people whose lives apparently hold no promise of release from misery, and a murky rain drenches the stage. Yet the audience comes away, not depressed, but uplifted by the vision of a man's triumphant quest for his own intellectual integrity. Only consummate artistry in writing, acting, photography and direction could produce such an effect. Burgess Meredeth is cast in the role of a youth who has consecrated his life to avenging the unjust execution of his father for murder and to lifting the stigma from his own and his father's name. The picture is a subjective treatment of the effect of the tragedy on the lives of various persons who were concerned: the boy, the real murderers, a witness who kept silent and the judge who wanders through the picture, vainly trying to justify to himself his action in sentencing an innocent man to death. The production is an extraordinarily successful example of a superb stage play transferred to the screen without losing its original quality. Not a line or a scene is extraneous. Without seming in the least restricted by the necessity for adhering to a definite pattern, it is a beautifully unified whole, tremendously tense, thrilling and spiritually satisfying.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 No **Children, 8 to 12** No

• • •

A WOMAN REBELS

Katherine Hepburn, Herbert Marshall, Elizabeth Allan, Donald Crisp, Doris Dudley, David Manners, Lucile Watson, Van Helflin. From the novel "Portrait of a Rebel," by Netta Syrett. Screen play by Anthony Veiller and Ernest Vajda. Direction by Mark Sandrich. R.K.O.

A thoughtful, tender, humorous yet tragic portrait of a Mid-Victorian young woman who rebels against her father's tyrannical dicipline and notions of the proper conduct required of a dutiful daughter. Delicate and clear-cut, as a cameo, the picture is notable for its atmosphere. Those who like Miss Hepburn's technique will find her delightful both as the lovely inexperienced girl and as the older woman who has gallantly won her way through the tragedy of an unwise love affair and the hostility of contemporary society to the security of mature love and a recognized position as an intellectual leader of women. The plot seems a little too long drawn out, possibly because the first part of the picture is the more charming pictorially. The settings will appeal particularly to audiences whose memories embrace the Victorian era, but Miss Hepburn even in a costume role is vital enough to interest a later generation in her onslaughts upon the prejudices of the time.

Adolescents, 12 to 16 Too mature a problem **Children, 8 to 12** No

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SHORT SUBJECTS

MORE KITTENS

U.A. Silly Symphony in Color.

A bunch of frisky kittens are driven from a house by an annoyed housewife. They set out upon a series of frolicsome adventures, only to be outwitted by a tiny bird. The musical accompaniment is delightful and the entertainment never flags. Excellent for children and family.

MOTHER PLUTO

U.A. Mickey Mouse in Color.

"Mother" Pluto is a large, comfortable dog who comes home to his dog-house just as a number of eggs, in a nest hidden there, hatch out into lovely fluffy chicks. They assume him to be their mother, and flock around him until he perforce takes them into the shelter of his paws. The mother hen, returning, is shocked by the sight, and summons her rooster, who proceeds to do lively battle with Pluto. Most amusing for children and family.

THE COUNTRY COUSIN

U.A. Silly Symphony in Color.

The country cousin mouse visits his city relative and is entranced by all the new and toothsome delicacies to which he is introduced. It all goes to his head, particularly the champagne, and he becomes deliciously intoxicated. His reactions of features and legs are so human, they leave one gasping with amusement, and also with amazement at the artistic and technical perfection of the film. Excellent for children and family.

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